

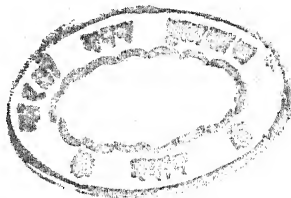
THROUGH CONGRESS EYES

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# Through Congress Eyes

*By*

SUBHAS C. BOSE



K I T A B I S T A N

ALLAHABAD

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20-21 Tooks Court, Cursitor Street, LONDON E. C. 4



## PUBLISHERS' NOTE

Enquiries are often made for the writings of Mr. Bose. Here they are for the first time made available in a handy and permanent form.

Most of the articles were written between the years 1935 and 1937, in the intervals of an exceedingly arduous and busy life. The marked variety of subjects discussed constitutes the main charm of this volume. The first six articles relate to problems which are engaging widespread attention to-day. 'India Abroad' has been included here because there is probably no other person who can speak with the same authority on that subject.

The shorter articles are interesting, if for no other reason, as first-hand impressions of persons and places. In the last two articles, Mr. Bose, in a dispassionate and objective manner explains why the situation in Europe and the Far East is what it is to-day. He sympathizes with China for no sentimental reason nor does he condemn Japan on ideological grounds, but because such conclusions are inevitable. The inclusion of

his Presidential Address needs no explanation.

Acknowledgments are due to the "Modern Review" of Calcutta, the "Contemporary Review" of Lahore and the "Orient" of Calcutta, for reproduction of articles first published by them.

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
1. Presidential Address to the National Congress Haripura, 1938 .. ..	1
2. The Pros and Cons of Office Acceptance .. ..	52
3. Through Congress Eyes .. ..	70
4. India Abroad .. ..	76
5. Labour in Jamshedpur—The other side of the Picture .. ..	94
6. Fifty Years of Indo-British Trade .. ..	119
7. What Romain Rolland Thinks .. ..	140
8. A Friend of India in Poland .. ..	154
9. An Indian Colonel in Romania .. ..	159
10. Passing Through Cairo .. ..	164
11. A Glimpse of Aden .. ..	175
12. Japan's Role in the Far East .. ..	180
13. Europe : To-day and To-morrow .. ..	214
14. Reply to the Address of Bombay Corporation .. ..	240



941/256

## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE NATIONAL CONGRESS

HARIPURA 1938

I am deeply sensible of the honour you have done me by electing me as the President of the Indian National Congress for the coming year. I am not so presumptuous as to think for one moment that I am in any way worthy of that great honour. I regard it as a mark of your generosity and as a tribute to the youths of our country, but for whose cumulative contribution to our national struggle, we would not be where we are to-day. It is with a sense of fear and trepidation that I mount the tribune, which has hitherto been graced by the most illustrious sons and daughters of our 'motherland.' Conscious as I am of my numerous limitations, I can only hope and pray, that with your sympathy and support, I may be able in some small measure to do justice to the high office which you have called upon me to fill.

At the outset, may I voice your feelings in placing on record our profound grief at the death

of Shrimati Swaruprani Nehru, Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose and Dr. Sarat Chandra Chatterji? Shrimati Swaruprani Nehru was to us not merely the worthy consort of Pandit Motilal and the revered mother of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Her suffering, sacrifice and service in the cause of India's freedom were such as any individual could feel proud of. As compatriots we mourn her death and our hearts go out in sympathy to Pandit Nehru and other members of the bereaved family.

To Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose India will always remain beholden for being the first to secure for her an honoured place in the modern scientific world. A nationalist to the core of his heart, Acharya Jagadish gave his life not merely to science, but to India as well. India knows it and is grateful for it. We convey our heartfelt sympathy to Lady Bose.

Through the untimely death of Dr. Sarat Chandra Chatterji, India has lost one of the brightest stars in her literary firmament. His name, for years, a household word in Bengal, was not less known in the literary world of India. But if Sarat Babu was great as a *litterateur*, he was perhaps greater as a patriot. The Congress in Bengal is distinctly poorer to-day because of his death. We

send our sincerest condolence to the members of his family.

Before I proceed further I should like to bow my head in homage to the memory of those who have laid down their lives in the service of the country since the Congress met last year at Faizpur. I should mention especially those who died in prison or in internment or soon after release from internment. I should refer in particular to Syt. Harendra Munshi, a political prisoner in the Dacca Central Jail, who laid down his life the other day as a result of hunger-strike. My feelings are still too lacerated to permit me to say much on this subject. I shall only ask you if there is not 'something rotten in the state of Denmark' that such bright and promising souls as Jatin Das, Sardar Mahabir Singh, Ramkrishna Namadas, Mohit Mohan Maitra, Harendra Munshi and others should feel the urge not to live life but to end it.

When we take a bird's-eye view of the entire panorama of human history, the first thing that strikes us is the rise and fall of empires. In the East as well as in the West, empires have invariably gone through a process of expansion and after reaching the zenith of prosperity, have gradually shrunk into insignificance and sometimes death.

The Roman Empire of the ancient times and the Turkish and Austro-Hungarian empires of the modern period are striking examples of this law. The empires in India—the Maurya, Gupta and the Mogul empires—are no exception to this rule. In the face of these objective facts of history, can anyone be so bold as to maintain that there is in store a different fate for the British Empire? That Empire stands to-day at one of the cross-roads of history. It will either go the way of other empires or it must transform itself into a federation of free nations. Either course is open to it. The Czarist empire collapsed in 1917 but out of its debris sprang the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. There is still time for Great Britain to take a leaf out of Russian history. Will she do so?

The British Empire is a hybrid phenomenon in politics. It is a peculiar combination of self-governing countries, partially self-governing dependencies and autocratically governed colonies. Constitutional device and human ingenuity may bolster up this combination for a while, but not for ever. If the internal incongruities are not removed in good time, then quite apart from external pressure, the empire is sure to break down under its own strain. But can the British Empire trans-

form itself into a federation of free nations with one bold sweep? It is for the British people to answer this question. One thing, however, is certain. This transformation will be possible only if the British people become free in their own homes—only if Great Britain becomes a socialist state. There is an inseparable connection between the capitalist ruling classes in Great Britain and the colonies abroad. As Lenin pointed out long ago, “reaction in Great Britain is strengthened and fed by the enslavement of a number of nations.” The British aristocracy and bourgeoisie exist primarily because there are colonies and overseas dependencies to exploit. The emancipation of the latter will undoubtedly strike at the very existence of the capitalist ruling classes in Great Britain and precipitate the establishment of a socialist regime in that country. It should, therefore, be clear that a socialist order in Great Britain is impossible of achievement without the liquidation of colonialism, and that we, who are fighting for the political freedom of India and other enslaved countries of the British Empire, are incidentally fighting for the economic emancipation of the British people as well.

It is a well-known truism that every empire is

based on the policy of divide and rule. But I doubt if any empire in the world has practised this policy so skilfully, systematically and ruthlessly as Great Britain. In accordance with this policy, before power was handed over to the Irish people, Ulster was separated from the rest of Ireland. Similarly, before any power is handed over to the Palestinians, the Jews will be separated from the Arabs. An internal partition is necessary in order to neutralise the transference of power. The same principle of partition appears in a different form in the new Indian Constitution. Here we find an attempt to separate the different communities and put them into water-tight compartments. And in the Federal scheme there is juxtaposition of autocratic Princes and democratically elected representatives from British India. If the new Constitution is finally rejected, whether owing to the opposition of British India or owing to the refusal of the Princes to joining it, I have no doubt that British ingenuity will seek some other constitutional device for partitioning India and thereby neutralising the transference of power to the Indian people. Therefore, any constitution for India which emanates from Whitehall must be examined with the utmost care and caution.

The policy of divide and rule, though it has its obvious advantages, is by no means an unmixed blessing for the ruling power. As a matter of fact it creates new problems and new embarrassments. Great Britain seems to be caught in the meshes of her own political dualism resulting from her policy of divide and rule. Will she please the Moslem or the Hindu in India? Will she favour the Arab or the Jew in Palestine—the Arab or the Kurd in Iraq? Will she side with the King or the Wafd in Egypt? The same dualism is visible outside the empire. In the case of Spain, British politicians are torn between such alternatives as Franco and the lawful Government—and in the wider field of European politics, between France and Germany. The contradictions and inconsistencies in Britain's foreign policy are the direct outcome of the heterogeneous composition of her Empire. The British Cabinet has to please the Jews because she cannot ignore Jewish high finance. On the other hand, the India Office and Foreign Office have to placate the Arabs because of Imperial interests in the Near East and in India. The only means whereby Great Britain can free herself from such contradictions and inconsistencies is by transforming the Empire into a federation of free nations. If she

could do that, she would be performing a miracle in history. But if she fails, she must reconcile herself to the gradual dismemberment of a vast empire where the sun is supposed not to set. Let not the lesson of the Austro-Hungarian Empire be lost on the British people.

The British Empire at the present moment is suffering from strain at a number of points. Within the Empire in the extreme West there is Ireland and in the extreme East, India. In the middle lies Palestine with the adjoining countries of Egypt and Iraq. Outside the empire there is the pressure exerted by Italy in the Mediterranean and Japan in the Far East, both of these countries being militant, aggressive and imperialist. Against this background of unrest stands Soviet Russia whose very existence strikes terror into the hearts of the ruling classes in every Imperialist State. How long can the British Empire withstand the cumulative effect of this pressure and strain?

To-day, Britain can hardly call herself "the Mistress of the Seas." Her phenomenal rise in the 18th and 19th centuries was the result of her sea power. Her decline as an empire in the 20th century will be the outcome of the emergence of a new factor in the world history—Air Force.

It was due to this new factor, Air Force, that an impudent Italy could successfully challenge a fully mobilised British Navy in the Mediterranean. Britain can rearm on land, sea and air up to the utmost limit. Battleships may still stand up to bombing from the air, but air force as a powerful element in modern warfare has come to stay. Distances have been obliterated and despite all anti-aircraft defences, London lies at the mercy of any bombing squadron from a continental centre. In short, air force has revolutionised modern warfare, destroyed the insularity of Great Britain and rudely disturbed the balance of power in world politics. The clay feet of a gigantic empire now stands exposed as it has never been before.

Amid this interplay of world forces India emerges much stronger than she has ever been before. Ours is a vast country with a population of 350 millions. Our vastness in area and in population has hitherto been a source of weakness. It is to-day a source of strength if we can only stand united and boldly face our rulers. From the standpoint of Indian unity the first thing to remember is that the division between British India and the Indian States is an entirely artificial one. India is one and the hopes and aspirations of the

people of British India and of the Indian States are identical. Our goal is that of an independent India and in my view that goal can be attained only through a federal republic in which the Provinces and the States will be willing partners. The Congress has, time and again, offered its sympathy and moral support to the movement carried on by the States' subjects for the establishment of democratic government in what is known as Indian India. It may be that at this moment our hands are so full that Congress is not in a position to do more for our compatriots in the States. But even to-day there is nothing to prevent individual Congressmen from actively espousing the cause of the States' subjects and participating in their struggle. There are people in the Congress like myself who would like to see the Congress participating more actively in the movement of the States' subjects. I personally hope that in the near future it will be possible for the Indian National Congress to take a forward step and offer a helping hand to our fellow-fighters in the States. Let us not forget that they need our sympathy and our help.

Talking of Indian unity the next thing that strikes us is the problem of the minorities. The

Congress has, from time to time, declared its policy on this question. The latest authoritative pronouncement made by the All-India Congress Committee at its meeting in Calcutta in October 1937, runs thus :

“The Congress has solemnly and repeatedly declared its policy in regard to the rights of the minorities in India and has stated that it considers it its duty to protect these rights and ensure the widest possible scope for the development of these minorities and their participation in the fullest measure in the political, economic and cultural life of the nation. The objective of the Congress is an independent and united India where no class or group or majority or minority may exploit another to its own advantage, and where all the elements in the nation may co-operate together for the common good and the advancement of the people of India. This objective of unity and mutual co-operation in a common freedom does not mean the suppression in any way of the rich variety and cultural diversity of Indian life, which have to be preserved in order to give freedom and opportunity to the individual as well as to each group to develop unhindered according to its capacity and inclination.

"In view, however, of attempts having been made to misinterpret the Congress policy in this regard, the All-India Congress Committee desire to reiterate this policy. The Congress has included in its resolution on Fundamental Rights that—

- (i) Every citizen of India has the right of free expression of opinion, the right of free association and combination, and the right to assemble peacefully and without arms, for a purpose not opposed to law or morality ;
- (ii) Every citizen shall enjoy freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess and practise his religion, subject to public order and morality ;
- (iii) The culture, language and script of the minorities and of the different linguistic areas shall be protected ;
- (iv) All citizens are equal before the law, irrespective of religion, caste, creed or sex ;
- (v) No disability attaches to any citizen by reason of his or her religion, caste, creed or sex, in regard to public employment, office of power or honour, and in the exercise of any trade or calling ;

- (vi) All citizens have equal rights and duties in regard to wells, tanks, roads, schools and places of public resort, maintained out of State, or local funds, or dedicated by private persons for the use of the general public ;
- (vii) The State shall observe neutrality in regard to all religions ;
- (viii) The franchise shall be on the basis of universal adult suffrage ;
- (ix) Every citizen is free to move throughout India and to stay and settle in any part thereof, to acquire property and to follow any trade or calling, and to be treated equally with regard to legal prosecution or protection in all parts of India.

“These clauses of the Fundamental Rights resolution make it clear that there should be no interference in matters of conscience, religion, or culture, and a minority is entitled to keep its personal law without any change in this respect being imposed by the majority.

“The position of the Congress in regard to the Communal Decision has been repeatedly made clear in Congress resolutions and finally in the

Election Manifesto issued last year. The Congress is opposed to this decision as it is anti-national, anti-democratic and is a barrier to Indian freedom and the development of Indian unity. Nevertheless the Congress has declared that change in or supersession of the Communal Decision should only be brought about by the mutual agreement of the parties concerned. The Congress has always welcomed and is prepared to take advantage of any opportunity to bring about such a change by mutual agreement.

“In all matters affecting the minorities in India, the Congress wishes to proceed by their co-operation and through their goodwill in a common undertaking and for the realization of a common aim which is the freedom and betterment of all the people of India.”

The time is opportune for renewing our efforts for the final solution of this problem. I believe I am voicing the feelings of all Congressmen when I say that we are eager to do our very best to arrive at an agreed solution, consistent with the fundamental principles of nationalism. It is necessary for me to go into details as to the lines on which a solution should take place. Much useful ground has already been covered in past conferences

and conversations. I shall merely add that only by emphasising our common interests, economic and political, can we cut across communal divisions and dissensions. A policy of live and let live in matters religious and an understanding in matters economic and political should be our objective. Though the Muslim problem looms large whenever we think of the question of the minorities and though we are anxious to settle this problem finally, I must say that the Congress is equally desirous of doing justice to other minorities and especially the so-called depressed classes whose number is a very large one. I would put it to the members of the minority communities in India to consider dispassionately if they have anything to fear when the Congress programme is put into operation. The Congress stands for the political and economic rights of the Indian people as a whole. If it succeeds in executing its programme, the minority communities would be benefited as much as any other section of the Indian population. Moreover, if after the capture of political power, national reconstruction takes place on socialistic lines—as I have no doubt it will—it is the ‘have-nots’ who will benefit at the expense of the ‘haves’ and the Indian masses have to be classified among

the 'have-nots'. There remains but one question which may be a source of anxiety to the minorities, *viz.*, religion and that aspect of culture that is based on religion. On this question the Congress policy is one of live and let live—a policy of complete non-interference in matters of conscience, religion and culture as well as of cultural autonomy for the different linguistic areas. The Muslims have, therefore, nothing to fear in the event of India winning her freedom—on the contrary they have everything to gain. So far as the religious and social disabilities of the so-called depressed classes are concerned, it is well known that during the last 17 years the Congress has left no stone unturned in the effort to remove them, and I have no doubt that the day is not far off when such disabilities will be things of the past.

I shall now proceed to consider the method which the Congress should pursue in the years to come as well as its role in the national struggle. I believe more than ever that the method should be *Satyagraha* or non-violent non-co-operation in the widest sense of the term, including civil disobedience. It would not be correct to call our method passive resistance. *Satyagraha*, as I understand it, is not merely passive resistance

but active resistance as well, though that activity must be of a non-violent character. It is necessary to remind our countrymen that *Satyagraha* or non-violent non-co-operation may have to be resorted to again. The acceptance of office in the provinces as an experimental measure should not lead us to think that our future activity is to be confined within the limits of strict constitutionalism. There is every possibility that a determined opposition to the forcible inauguration of federation may land us in another big campaign of civil disobedience.

In our struggle for independence we may adopt either of two alternatives. We may continue our fight until we have our full freedom and in the meantime decline to use any power that we may capture while on the march. We may, on the other hand, go on consolidating our position while we continue our struggle for Purna Swaraj or complete independence. From the point of view of principle, both the alternatives are equally acceptable and *a priori* considerations need not worry us. But we should consider very carefully at every stage as to which alternative would be more conducive to our national advancement. In either case, the ultimate stage in our progress will be the severance of the British connection. When that

severance takes place and there is no trace left of British domination, we shall be in a position to determine our future relations with Great Britain through a treaty of alliance voluntarily entered into by both parties. What our future relations with Great Britain will or should be, it is too early to say. That will depend to a large extent on the attitude of the British people themselves. On this point I have been greatly impressed by the attitude of President de Valera. Like the President of Eire, I should also say that we have no enmity towards the British people. We are fighting Great Britain and we want the fullest liberty to determine our future relations with her. But once we have real self-determination, there is no reason why we should not enter into the most cordial relations with the British people.

I am afraid there is a lack of clarity in the minds of many Congressmen as to the role of the Congress in the history of our national struggle. I know that there are friends who think that after freedom is won, the Congress party, having achieved its objective, should wither away. Such a conception is entirely erroneous. The party that wins freedom for India should be also the party that will put into effect the entire programme of post-War

reconstruction. Only those who have won power can handle it properly. If other people are pitchforked into seats of power which they were not responsible for capturing, they will lack that strength, confidence and idealism which is indispensable for revolutionary reconstruction. It is this which accounts for the difference in the record of the Congress and non-Congress ministries in the very narrow sphere of Provincial Autonomy.

No, there can be no question of the Congress party withering away after political freedom has been won. On the contrary, the party will have to take over power, assume responsibility for administration and put through its programme of reconstruction. Only then will it fulfil its role. If it were forcibly to liquidate itself, chaos would follow. Looking at post-War Europe we find that only in those countries has there been orderly and continuous progress where the party which seized power undertook the work of reconstruction. I know that it will be argued that the continuance of a party in such circumstances, standing behind the state, will convert that state into a totalitarian one; but I cannot admit the charge. The state will possibly become a totalitarian one, if there be only one party as in countries like Russia, Germany

and Italy. But there is no reason why other parties should be banned. Moreover, the party itself will have a democratic basis, unlike, for instance, the Nazi Party which is based on the "leader principle". The existence of more than one party and the democratic basis of the Congress party will prevent the future Indian State becoming a totalitarian one. Further, the democratic basis of the party will ensure that leaders are not thrust upon the people from above, but are elected from below.

Though it may be somewhat premature to give a detailed plan of reconstruction, we might as well consider some of the principles according to which our future social reconstruction should take place. I have no doubt in my mind that our chief national problems relating to the eradication of poverty, illiteracy and disease and to scientific production and distribution can be effectively tackled only along socialistic lines. The very first thing which our future national government will have to do, would be to set up a commission for drawing up a comprehensive plan of reconstruction. This plan will have two parts—an immediate programme and a long-period programme. In drawing up the first part, the immediate objectives which will have to be kept in view will be threefold ; firstly, to pre-

pare the country for self-sacrifice; secondly, to unify India; and thirdly, to give scope for local and cultural autonomy. The second and third objectives may appear to be contradictory, but they are not really so. Whatever political talent or genius we may possess as a people, will have to be used in reconciling these two objectives. We shall have to unify the country so that we may be able to hold India against any foreign invasion. While unifying the country through a strong central government, we shall have to put all the minority communities as well as the provinces at their ease, by allowing them a large measure of autonomy in cultural as well as governmental affairs. Special efforts will be needed to keep our people together when the load of foreign domination is removed, because alien rule has demoralised and disorganised us to a degree. To promote national unity we shall have to develop our *lingua franca* and a common script. Further, with the help of such modern scientific contrivances as aeroplanes, telephone, radio, films, television etc., we shall have to bring the different parts of India closer to one another and through a common educational policy we shall have to foster a common spirit among the entire population. So far as our *lingua franca* is concerned,

I am inclined to think that the distinction between Hindi and Urdu is an artificial one. The most natural *lingua franca* would be a mixture of the two, such as is spoken in daily life in large portions of the country and this common language may be written in either of the two scripts, Nagari or Urdu. I am aware that there are people in India who strongly favour either of the two scripts to the exclusion of the other. Our policy, however, should not be one of exclusion. We should allow the fullest latitude to use either script. At the same time, I am inclined to think that the ultimate solution and the best solution would be the adoption of a script that would bring us into line with the rest of the world. Perhaps, some of our countrymen will gape with horror when they hear of the adoption of the Roman script, but I would beg them to consider this problem from the scientific and historical point of view. If we do that, we shall realise at once that there is nothing sacrosanct in a script. The Nagari script, as we know it to-day, has passed through several phases of evolution. Besides, most of the major provinces of India have their own script and there is the Urdu script which is used largely by the Urdu-speaking public in India and by both Muslims and Hindus in provinces like the Punjab

and Sind. In view of such diversity, the choice of a uniform script for the whole of India should be made in a thoroughly scientific and impartial spirit, free from bias of every kind. I confess that there was a time when I felt that it would be anti-national to adopt a foreign script. But my visit to Turkey in 1934 was responsible for converting me. I then realised for the first time what a great advantage it was to have the same script as the rest of the world. So far as our masses are concerned, since more than 90 per cent are illiterate and are not familiar with any script, it will not matter to them which script we introduce when they are educated. The Roman script will, moreover, facilitate their learning a European language. I am quite aware how unpopular the immediate adoption of the Roman script would be in our country. Nevertheless, I would beg my countrymen to consider what would be the wisest solution in the long run.

With regard to the long-period programme for a free India, the first problem to tackle is that of our increasing population. I do not desire to go into the theoretical question as to whether India is overpopulated or not. I simply want to point out that where poverty, starvation and disease are

stalking the land, we cannot afford to have our population mounting up by thirty millions during a single decade. If the population goes up by leaps and bounds, as it has done in the recent past, our plans are likely to fall through. It will therefore be desirable to restrict our population until we are able to feed, clothe and educate those who already exist. It is not necessary at this stage to prescribe the methods that should be adopted to prevent a further increase in population, but I would urge that public attention be drawn to this question.

Regarding reconstruction, our principal problem will be how to eradicate poverty from our country. That will require a radical reform of our land-system, including the abolition of landlordism. Agricultural indebtedness will have to be liquidated and provision made for cheap credit for the rural population. An extension of the co-operative movement will be necessary for the benefit of both producers and consumers. Agriculture will have to be put on a scientific basis with a view to increasing the yield from the land.

To solve the economic problem, agricultural improvement will not be enough. A comprehensive scheme of industrial development under state-ownership and state-control will be indispensable.

A new industrial system will have to be built up in place of the old one which has collapsed as a result of mass production abroad and alien rule at home. The Planning Commission will have to carefully consider and decide which of the home industries could be revived despite the competition of modern factories and in which sphere, large-scale production should be encouraged. However much we may dislike modern industrialism and condemn the evils which follow in its train, we cannot go back to the pre-industrial era, even if we desire to do so. It is well, therefore, that we should reconcile ourselves to industrialisation and devise means to minimise its evils and at the same time explore the possibilities of reviving cottage industries where there is a possibility of their surviving the inevitable competition of factories. In a country like India, there will be plenty of room for cottage industries, especially in the case of industries including hand-spinning and hand-weaving allied to agriculture.

Last but not least, the State on the advice of a Planning Commission, will have to adopt a comprehensive scheme for gradually socializing our entire agricultural and industrial system in the spheres of both production and appropriation. Extra capital will have to be procured for this,

whether through internal or external loans or through inflation.

Opposing or resisting the provincial part of the constitution will be hardly possible now, since the Congress Party has accepted office in seven out of eleven provinces. All that could be done would be to strengthen and consolidate the Congress as a result of it. I am one of those who were not in favour of taking office, not because there was something inherently wrong in doing so, not because no good could come out of that policy, but because it was apprehended that the evil effects of office-acceptance would outweigh the good. To-day I can only hope that my forebodings were unfounded.

How can we strengthen and consolidate the Congress while our Ministers are in office? The first thing to do is to change the composition and character of the bureaucracy. If this is not done, the Congress Party may come to grief. In every country, the Ministers come and go, but the steel frame of the permanent services remains. If that is not altered in composition and character, the governmental party and its cabinet are likely to prove ineffective in putting their principles into practice. This is what happened in the case of the

Social Democratic Party in post-War Germany and perhaps in the case of the Labour Party in Great Britain in 1924 and 1929. It is the permanent services who really rule in every country. In India they have been created by the British and in the higher ranks they are largely British in composition. Their outlook and mentality is in most cases neither Indian nor national and a national policy cannot be executed until the permanent services become national in outlook and mentality. The difficulty, of course, will be that the higher ranks of the permanent services being, under the Statute, directly under the Secretary of State for India and not under the provincial Governments, it will not be easy to alter their composition.

Secondly, the Congress Ministers in the different provinces should, while they are in office, introduce schemes of reconstruction in the spheres of education, health, prohibition, prison reform, irrigation, industry, land-reform, workers' welfare, etc. In this matter, attempts should be made to have, as far as possible, a uniform policy for the whole of India. This uniformity could be brought about in either of two ways. The Congress Ministers in the different provinces could themselves come together—as the Labour Ministers did in October, 1937

in Calcutta—and draw up a uniform programme. Over and above this, the Congress Working Committee, which is the supreme executive of the Congress, could lend a helping hand by giving directions to the different departments of the Congress-controlled provincial governments in the light of such advice as it may get from its own experts. This will mean that the members of the Congress Working Committee should be conversant with the problems that come within the purview of the Congress governments in the provinces. It is not intended that they should go into the details of administration. All that is needed is that they should have a general understanding of the different problems so that they could lay down the broad lines of policy. In this respect, the Congress Working Committee could do much more than it has hitherto done and unless it does so, I do not see how that body can keep an effective control over the different Congress ministries.

At this stage I should like to say something more about the role of the Congress Working Committee. This Committee, in my judgment, is not merely the directing brain of the national army of fighters for freedom. It is also the shadow cabinet of independent India and it should function

accordingly. This is not an invention of my own. It is the role which has been assigned to similar bodies in other countries that have fought for their national emancipation. I am one of those who think in terms of a Free India—who visualise a national government in this country within the brief span of our own life. It is consequently natural for us to urge that the Working Committee should feel and function as the Shadow Cabinet of a Free India. This is what President de Valera's republican government did when it was fighting the British Government and was on the run. And this is what the Executive of the Wafd Party in Egypt did before it got into office. The members of the Working Committee while carrying on their day to day work should accordingly study the problems they will have to tackle in the event of their capturing political power.

More important than the question of the proper working of the Congress Governments is the immediate problem of how to oppose the inauguration of the federal part of the Constitution. The Congress attitude towards the proposed federal scheme has been clearly stated in the resolution adopted by the Working Committee at Wardha on February 4, 1938, which will be placed

before this Congress after the Subjects Committee has considered it. That resolution says :—

“The Congress has rejected the new Constitution and declared that a constitution for India which can be accepted by the people must be based on Independence and can only be framed by the people themselves by means of a Constituent Assembly without the interference by any foreign authority. Adhering to this policy of rejection, the Congress has, however, permitted the formation in Provinces of Congress Ministries with a view to strengthening the nation in its struggle for Independence. In regard to the proposed federation, no such consideration applies even provisionally, or for a period, and the imposition of this Federation will do grave injuries to India and tighten the bonds which hold her under the subjection of an imperialist domination. This scheme of Federation excludes from the sphere of responsibility the vital functions of a Government.

“The Congress is not opposed to the idea of Federation, but a real Federation must, even apart from the question of responsibility, consist of free units, enjoying more or less the same measure of freedom and civil liberty and representation by a democratic process of election. Indian States

participating in the Federation should approximate to the Provinces in the establishment of representative institutions, responsible Government, civil liberties and the method of election to the Federal House. Otherwise Federation as it is now contemplated will, instead of building Indian unity, encourage separatist tendencies and involve the States in internal and external conflict.

"The Congress, therefore, reiterates its condemnation of the proposed scheme and calls upon Provincial and Local Congress Committees and the people generally as well as Provincial Governments and Ministries, to prevent its inauguration.

"In the event of an attempt being made to impose it, despite the declared will of the people, such an attempt must be combated in every way and the Provincial Governments and Ministries must refuse to co-operate with it.

"In case such a contingency arises, the A. I. C. C. is authorised and directed to determine the line of action to be pursued in this regard."

I should like to add some more arguments to explain our attitude of uncompromising hostility towards the proposed Federation. One of the most objectionable features of the Federal Scheme relates to the commercial and financial safeguards in the

new Constitution. Not only will the people continue to be deprived of any power over defence or foreign policy, but the major portion of the expenditure will also be entirely out of popular control. According to the budget of the Central Government for the year 1937-38, the Army expenditure comes to 44.61 crores of rupees (£33.46 millions) out of a total expenditure of 77.90 crores of rupees (£58.42 millions)—that is, roughly 57 per cent of the total expenditure of the Central Government. It appears that the reserved side of the Federal Government which will be controlled by the Governor-General will handle about 80 per cent of the Federal expenditure. Moreover, bodies like the Reserve Bank and the Federal Railway Authority are already created or will be created which will work as *imperium in imperio* uncontrolled by a Federal Legislature. The Legislature will be deprived of the powers it possesses at present to direct and influence railway policy and it will not have any voice in determining the currency and exchange policy of the country which has a vital bearing on its economic development.

The fact that external affairs will be a reserved subject under the Federal Government will prejudicially affect the freedom of the Indian Legislature

to conclude trade agreements and will seriously restrict, in effect, fiscal autonomy. The Federal Government will not be under any constitutional obligation to place such trade agreements before the Legislature for their ratification, even as they decline at present to give an undertaking to place the Indo-British Trade Agreement before the Indian Legislative Assembly. The so-called fiscal autonomy convention will have no meaning unless it is stipulated that no trade agreement on behalf of India shall be signed by any party without its ratification by the Indian Legislature. In this connection, I should like to state that I am definitely of opinion that India should enter into bilateral trade agreements with countries like Germany, Czechoslovakia, Italy and the United States of America with whom she has had close trade relations in the past. But under the new Constitution, it will not be within the power of the Federal Legislature to force the Federal Government to enter into such bilateral trade agreements.

The iniquitous and inequitable commercial safeguards embodied in the Act will make it impossible for any effective measures to be adopted in order to protect and promote Indian national industries especially where they might, as they often

do, conflict with British commercial or industrial interests. In addition to the Governor-General's special responsibility to see that provisions with regard to discrimination, as laid down in the Act, are duly carried out, it is also his duty to prevent any action which would subject British goods imported into India to any kind of discriminatory or penal treatment. A careful study of these stringent and wide provisions will show that India can adopt no measures against British competition which the Governor-General cannot, in effect, stultify or veto whether in the legislative or in the administrative sphere. It is, of course, preposterous to permit foreigners in this country to compete with the nationals on equal terms and there can be no genuine Swaraj if India is to be denied the power to devise and adopt a national economic policy including the right, if her interests so require, of differentiating between nationals and non-nationals. In a famous article in "Young India" under the caption "The Giant and the Dwarf" written soon after the conclusion of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact in 1931, Mahatma Gandhi declared plainly that "to talk of no discrimination between Indian interests and English or European, is to perpetuate Indian helotage. What is equality of rights between a giant

and a dwarf?" Even the meagre powers enjoyed by the Central Legislature at present to enact a measure like the reservation of the Indian coastal trade for Indian-owned and Indian-managed vessels has been taken away under the so-called reformed Constitution. Shipping is a vital industry which is essential for defensive as well as for economic purposes, but all the accepted and legitimate methods of developing this key industry including those adopted even by several British Dominions, are henceforth rendered impossible for India. To justify such limitations on our sovereignty on the ground of "reciprocity" and "partnership" is literally to add insult to injury. The right of the future Indian Parliament to differentiate or discriminate between nationals and non-nationals whenever Indian interests require it, should remain intact and this right we cannot sacrifice on any account. I would like in this connection to cite the Irish parallel. The Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act of 1935 provides for a distinct Irish citizenship in connection with the electoral system, entry into public life, merchant shipping law, aircraft as also in connection with special privileges which it is thought proper to reserve for Irish nationals, such as those conferred through measures for assisting Irish

industry. Irish citizenship, in other words, is distinct from British, which cannot claim equal rights in the State of Eire (or Ireland) on the basis of British citizenship which is not recognised there. I feel that India must similarly seek to develop her own distinct nationality and establish a citizenship of her own.

While on the question of fiscal autonomy and commercial safeguards, I might refer briefly to the need of an active foreign trade policy for India. India's foreign trade should be viewed not in a haphazard or piecemeal manner as is often done in order to provide some immediate or temporary benefit to British industry, but in a comprehensive manner so as to co-ordinate India's economic development with its export trade on the one hand and its external obligation on the other. The very nature of India's export trade makes it essential that it shall not have any restrictive agreement with England such as would jeopardise its trade with the various non-Empire countries which have been in several respects its best customers, or such as would tend to weaken India's bargaining power *vis-a-vis* other countries. It is unfortunate that the protracted negotiations for an Indo-British Trade Agreement are still proceeding, while the

Ottawa Agreement, even after the expiry of its notice period and despite the decision of the Legislative Assembly to terminate it, still continues, and along with the differential duties on British steel and textiles, the said Ottawa Agreement secures the prevailing advantages for British industries. There is no doubt that under the existing political conditions, any trade agreement between England and India is bound to be of an unequal character because our present political relationship would weight the scales heavily in favour of England. There is also no doubt that the British preferential system is political in origin and before we permit non-Indian vested interests to be established or consolidated in this country under the shelter of a trade agreement, we should be careful as to its political repercussions and economic consequences. I trust that the present Indo-British Trade negotiations will not be allowed to impede the conclusion of bilateral trade agreements with other countries whenever possible and that no such trade agreement will be signed by the Government of India unless it is ratified by the Indian Legislature.

From the above, it will be quite clear that there is no analogy between the powers of the provincial ministries and those of the proposed federal minis-

try. Moreover, the composition of the Federal Legislature is reactionary to a degree. The total population of the Indian States is roughly 24 per cent of that of the whole of India. Nevertheless, the Rulers of the States, not their subjects, have been given 33 per cent of the seats in the Lower House and 40 per cent in the Upper House of the Federal Legislature. In these circumstances, there is no possibility, in my opinion, of the Congress altering its attitude towards the Federal Scheme at any time. On our success in resisting the imposition of Federation by the British Government will depend our immediate political future. We have to fight Federation by all legitimate and peaceful means—not merely along constitutional lines—and in the last resort, we may have to resort to mass civil disobedience which is the ultimate sanction we have in our hands. There can be little doubt that in the event of such a campaign being started in the future, the movement will not be confined to British India but will spread among the States' subjects.

To put up an effective fight in the near future, it is necessary to put our own house in order. The awakening among our masses during the last few years has been so tremendous that new problems

have arisen concerning our party organization. Meetings attended by fifty thousand men and women are an usual occurrence now-a-days. It is sometimes found that to control such meetings and demonstrations, our machinery is not adequate. Apart from these passing demonstrations, there is the bigger problem of mobilising this phenomenal mass energy and enthusiasm and directing them along proper lines. But have we got a well-disciplined Volunteer Corps for this purpose? Have we got a cadre of officers for our national service? Do we provide any training for our budding leaders, for our promising young workers? The answers to these questions are too patent to need elaboration. We have not yet provided all these requirements of a modern political party, but it is high time that we did. A disciplined Volunteer Corps manned by trained officers is exceedingly necessary. Moreover, education and training should be provided for our political workers so that we may produce a better type of leaders in future. This sort of training is provided by political parties in Britain through Summer Schools and other institutions—and is a speciality in totalitarian states. With all respect to our workers who have played a glorious part in our struggle, I must confess that

there is room for more talent in our party. This defect can be made up partly by recruiting promising young men for the Congress and partly by providing education and training for those whom we already have. Everybody must have observed how some European countries have been dealing with this problem. Though our ideals and methods of training are quite different from theirs, it will be admitted on all hands that a thorough, scientific training is a requisite for our workers. Further, an institution like the Labour Service Corps of the Nazis deserves careful study and, with suitable modification, may prove beneficial to India.

While dealing with the question of enforcing discipline within our own party, we have to consider a problem which has been causing worry and embarrassment to many of us. I am referring to organisations like the Trade Union Congress and the Kisan Sabhas and their relations with the Indian National Congress. There are two opposing schools of thought on this question—those who condemn any organisations that are outside the Congress and those who advocate them. My own view is that we cannot abolish such organisations by ignoring or condemning them. They

exist as objective facts and since they have come into existence and show no signs of liquidating themselves, it should be manifest that there is a historical necessity behind them. Moreover, such organisations are to be found in other countries. I am afraid that whether we like it or not, we have to reconcile ourselves to their existence. The only question is how the Congress should treat them. Obviously, such organisations should not appear as a challenge to the National Congress which is the organ of mass struggle for capturing political power. They should, therefore, be inspired by Congress ideals and methods and work in close co-operation with the Congress. To ensure this, Congress workers should in large numbers participate in trade union and peasant organisations. From my own experience of trade union work I feel that this could easily be done without landing oneself in conflict or inconsistency. Co-operation between the Congress and the other two organisations could be facilitated if the latter deal primarily with the economic grievances of the workers and peasants and treat the Congress as a common platform for all those who strive for the political emancipation of their country.

This brings us to the vexed problem of the

collective affiliation of workers' and peasants' organisations to the Congress. Personally, I hold the view that the day will come when we shall have to grant this affiliation in order to bring all progressive and anti-imperialist organisations under the influence and control of the Congress. There will, of course, be difference of opinion as to the manner and the extent to which this affiliation should be given and the character and stability of such organisations will have to be examined before affiliation could be agreed to. In Russia, the united front of the Soviets of workers, peasants and soldiers played a dominant part in the October revolution—but, on the contrary, in Great Britain we find that the British Trade Union Congress exerts a moderating influence on the National Executive of the Labour Party. In India we shall have to consider carefully what sort of influence, organisations like the Trade Union Congress and the Kisan Sabhas will exert on the Indian National Congress in the event of affiliation being granted and we should not forget that there is the possibility that the former may not have a radical outlook if their immediate economic grievances are not involved. In any case, quite apart from the question of collective affiliation, there should be the closest co-opera-

tion between the National Congress and other anti-imperialist organisations and this object would be facilitated by the latter adopting the principles and methods of the former.

There has been a great deal of controversy over the question of forming a party, like the Congress Socialist Party, within the Congress. I hold no brief for the Congress Socialist Party, and I am not a member of it. Nevertheless, I must say that I have been in agreement with its general principles and policy from the very beginning. In the first place, it is desirable for the leftist elements to be consolidated into one party. Secondly, a leftist *bloc* can have a *raison d'être* only if it is socialist in character. There are friends who object to such a *bloc* being called a party, but to my mind it is quite immaterial whether you call that *bloc* a group, league or party. Within the limits prescribed by the constitution of the Indian National Congress it is quite possible for a leftist *bloc* to have a socialist programme, in which case it can be very well called a group, league or party. But the role of the Congress Socialist Party, or any other party of the same sort, should be that of a left-wing group. Socialism is not an immediate problem for us—nevertheless, socialist propaganda is necessary to prepare the

country for socialism when political freedom has been won. And that propaganda can be conducted only by a party like the Congress Socialist Party, which stands for and believes in Socialism.

There is one problem in which I have been taking a deep, personal interest for some years and in connection with which I should like to make my submission—I mean the question of a foreign policy for India and of developing international contacts. I attach great importance to this work because I believe that in the years to come, international developments will favour our struggle in India. But we must have a correct appreciation of the world situation at every stage and should know how to take advantage of it. The lesson of Egypt stands before us as an example. Egypt won her Treaty of Alliance with Great Britain without firing a shot, simply because she knew how to take advantage of the Anglo-Italian tension in the Mediterranean.

In connection with our foreign policy, the first suggestion that I have to make is that we should not be influenced by the internal politics of any country or the form of its state. We shall find in every country, men and women who will sympathise with Indian freedom, no matter what their

own political views may be. In this matter we should take a leaf out of Soviet diplomacy. Though Soviet Russia is a communist state, her diplomats have not hesitated to make alliances with non-socialist states and have not declined sympathy or support coming from any quarter. We should therefore aim at developing a nucleus of men and women in every country who would feel sympathetic towards India. To create and develop such a nucleus, propaganda through the foreign press, through Indian-made films and through art exhibitions would be helpful. The Chinese, for example, have made themselves exceedingly popular in Europe through their art exhibitions. Above all, personal contacts are necessary. Without such personal contacts, it would be difficult to make India popular in other countries. Indian students abroad could also help in this work, provided we in India look to their needs and requirements. There should be closer contact between Indian students abroad and the Indian National Congress at home. If we could send out cultural and educational films made in India, I am sure that India and her culture would become known and appreciated by people abroad. Such films would prove exceedingly useful to Indian students and Indian residents

in other countries, who at present are like our non-official ambassadors.

I do not like the word propaganda—there is an air of falsity about it. But I insist that we should make India and her culture known to the world. I say this because I am aware that such efforts will be welcomed in every country in Europe and America. If we go ahead with this work, we shall be preparing the basis for our future embassies and legations in different lands. We should not neglect Great Britain either. We have even in that country a small but influential group of men and women who are genuinely sympathetic towards Indian aspirations. Among the rising generation, and students in particular, interest in and sympathy for India is rapidly on the increase. One has only to visit the Universities of Great Britain to realise that.

To carry on this work effectively, the Indian National Congress should have its trusted agents in Europe, Asia, Africa and in North, Central and South America. It is a pity that we have so far neglected Central and South America where there is profound interest in India. The Congress should be assisted in this work of developing international contacts by cultural organisations in India, work-

ing in the field of international culture and by the Indian Chambers of Commerce working in the sphere of international commerce. Further, Indians should make it a point to attend every International Congress or Conference. Participation in such conferences is a very useful and healthy form of propaganda for India.

While talking of international contacts, I should remove a misgiving which may be present in some minds. Developing international contacts does not mean intriguing against the British Government. We do not need go in for such intrigues and all our methods should be above board. The propaganda that goes on against India all over the world is to the effect that India is an uncivilized country and it is inferred therefrom that the British are needed in order to civilize us. As a reply, we have only to let the world know what we are and what our culture is like. If we can do that, we shall create such a volume of international sympathy in our favour that India's case will become irresistible before the bar of world opinion.

I should not forget to refer to the problems, the difficulties and the trials which face our countrymen in different parts of Asia and Africa—notably

in Zanzibar, Kenya, South Africa, Malaya and Ceylon. The Congress has always taken the keenest interest in their affairs and will continue to do so in future. If we have not been able to do more for them, it is only because we are still slaves at home. A free India will be a healthy and potent factor in world politics and will be able to look after the interests of its nationals abroad.

I must in this connection stress the desirability and necessity of developing closer cultural relations with our neighbours, *viz.*, Persia, Afghanistan, Nepal, China, Burma, Siam, Malaya States, East Indies and Ceylon. It would be good for both parties if they knew more of us and we knew more of them. With Burma and Ceylon, in particular, we should have the most intimate cultural intercourse, in view of our agelong contacts.

Friends, I am sorry I have taken more of your time than I had intended at first, but I am now nearing the end of my address. There is one important matter—the burning topic of the day—to which I should now draw your attention—the question of the release of detenus and political prisoners. The recent hunger-strikes have brought this question to the forefront and have focussed public attention on it. I believe that I am voicing

the feelings of at least the rank and file of the Congress when I say that everything humanly possible should be done to expedite release. So far as the Congress ministries are concerned, it would be well to note that the record of some of them has not come up to public expectation. The sooner they satisfy the public demand, the better it will be for the Congress and for the people who are suffering in provinces ruled by non-Congress ministries. It is not necessary for me to labour this point and I fervently hope that in the immediate future, the public will have nothing to complain of so far as the record of the Congress ministries on this point is concerned.

It is not only the detenus and political prisoners in jail and detention who have their tale of woe. The lot of those who have been released is sometimes no better. They often return home in shattered health, victims of fell diseases like Tuberculosis. Grim starvation stares them in the face and they are greeted, not with the smiles but with the tears of their near and dear ones. Have we no duty to those who have given of their best in the service of their country and have received nothing but poverty and sorrow in return? Let us, therefore, send our heartfelt sympathy to all those

who have suffered for the crime of loving their country and let us all contribute our humble mite towards the alleviation of their misery.

Friends, one word more and I have done. We are faced with a serious situation to-day. Inside the Congress there are differences between the right and the left which it would be futile to ignore. Outside, there is the challenge of British Imperialism which we are called upon to face. What shall we do in this crisis? Need I say that we have to stand four-square against all the storms that may beset our path and be impervious to all the designs that our rulers may employ? The Congress to-day is the one supreme organ of mass struggle. It may have its right *bloc* and its left—but it is the common platform for all anti-imperialist organisations striving for Indian emancipation. Let, us, therefore, rally the whole country under the banner of the Indian National Congress. I would appeal specially to the leftist groups in the country to pool all their strength and their resources for democratising the Congress and reorganising it on the broadest anti-imperialist basis. In making this appeal, I am greatly encouraged by the attitude of the leaders of the British Communist Party whose general policy with regard to India seems to me

to be in keeping with that of the Indian National Congress.

In conclusion, I shall voice your feelings by saying that all India fervently hopes and prays that Mahatma Gandhi may be spared to our nation for many, many years to come. India cannot afford to lose him and certainly not at this hour. We need him to keep our people united. We need him to keep our struggle free from bitterness and hatred. We need him for the cause of Indian Independence. What is more—we need him for the cause of humanity. Ours is a struggle not only against British Imperialism—but against world imperialism as well, of which the former is the key-stone. We are, therefore, fighting not for the cause of India alone, but of humanity as well. India freed means humanity saved.

## THE PROS AND CONS OF OFFICE ACCEPTANCE

Now that the Supreme Executive of the Indian National Congress has decided to permit members of the Congress to accept ministerial office in those provinces where the Congress Party is in a majority, it behoves us to be alert about the dangers ahead of us. Though there are going to be Congress Ministries in only six out of the eleven provinces in British India (*viz.*, in the United Provinces, Bihar, Orissa, Madras Presidency, Central Provinces and Bombay Presidency), there is no doubt that the attention of Congressmen throughout India and of the public in general, will, for some time to come, be riveted on the work of the Ministers and of the Provincial Legislatures. Constitutional activity will become the order of the day and extra-constitutional methods like civil disobedience, which have hitherto been the main political weapon in the hands of the Congress, will be relegated to the background. A psychological change in the mentality of the people will necessarily follow and

a desire for the loaves and fishes of office will creep into the minds of many Congressmen. The "rebel-mentality" which it has taken the Congress years to foster, will once again give place to self-complacence and inertia. These are some of the possibilities that are looming large to-day.

I am not one of those who consider that acceptance of ministerial office is wrong in principle. Entry into the Legislatures and acceptance of office no doubt involve taking the oath of allegiance to the British Crown. But I have always regarded such oaths as purely constitutional in character. Between 1922 and 1925, when the question of entry into the Legislatures was being hotly debated in Congress circles, the argument of the oppositionists that such entry necessarily implied swearing allegiance to the Crown, never appealed to me. I see nothing ethically wrong in Mr. de Valera's taking the oath of allegiance to the British Crown in order to go into the Dail and abolish that oath. The issues involved are not those of principle but of expediency and the standpoint from which I judge such issues is entirely realistic.

From my own experience of Municipal administration I feel sure that success in the administrative sphere demands a capacity for mastering infinite

details. Whole-hearted devotion to administrative work therefore rarely leaves one any spare time or energy for tackling broader issues. It is only seldom that we do come across men who can go into the minutest details of administration and simultaneously think out the more fundamental problems. I remember very clearly that when I was the Chief Executive Officer of the Calcutta Municipal Corporation in 1924, I was entirely lost to the Congress, so submerged was I in the details of Municipal administration. But I had gone into this work with my eyes open, because I had the assurance that there was no dearth of men to carry on Congress activities with unabated vigour.

I have always held the view that those who fight for freedom have to undertake the task of "post-War" reconstruction when freedom is won. There can be no shirking of responsibility of the pretext, "Our mission is over." Therefore, as soon as a political party is victorious, it has to throw itself heart and soul into the task of administration and social reconstruction and thereby demonstrate that it can create as effectively as it can destroy. But before the Party can undertake that responsibility, it has to decide if the longed-for hour has arrived and freedom's battle has been won. Com-

ing to the issue in hand, the question which confronts us is—"Does the Government of India Act, 1935 give what we have striven for? And leaving out the Central Government for the time being, does it even give us real autonomy in the provinces?" The obvious reply is—"No".

It will, of course, be argued, that in political as in military warfare, we have to occupy every vantage-point and consolidate our position, as we proceed towards our goal. Very true. But are we sure that in trying to capture the seats of power, for what they are worth, we shall not get lost in the labyrinth of administration and begin to renounce that "rebel mentality" which is the starting point of all political progress? The Congress to-day is clearly in the presence of a dilemma. In order to continue the fight for freedom which is less than half-won, it cannot afford to let all its front-rank men go in the ministerial office. On the other hand, unless really first-rate men become Congress ministers in the different provinces, we shall fail to make the fullest use of the seats of influence and power which the Constitution gives us. It was only a first-rate political genius like the late V. J. Patel who, as President of the Indian Legislative Assembly during the period 1925-1930, could

uphold the popular cause, create a parliamentary tradition and keep the members of the Treasury Benches in their places. A lesser man would certainly have failed. And placed alongside of V. J. Patel, Shanmukham Chettys and Abdur Rahims appear like negligible invertebrates.

It can or will be also urged by the protagonists of office-acceptance that experience in administration is indispensable for a political party and that the new Constitution offers scope for acquiring such experience. But this argument may easily be overdone. Experience in administration is the same as experience in organisation and while latter may be an asset for any party the former may be more of a handicap than otherwise. The greatest administrators in post-War Europe, as in all ages and in all climes, were comparatively young and also inexperienced in administration, when they took over the reins of office from their predecessors. One has only to look at successful administrators like Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, Mussolini and Kemal Pasha to appreciate the force of my argument. The fact is that after a revolution (whether violent or non-violent) the new administration requires principles and technique of quite a different order and, in order to cope with the new situation successfully,

as courage, imagination and resourcefulness. Did "experienced" administrators produce the Five-Year Plan for Soviet Russia or build up a new Republic for the Turks or found a new Empire for Italy or create a new Persia out of chaos and corruption?

There is no doubt that the central citadel of power and reaction (the Government of India) is still in the hands of the British Government and it is only the outposts, the Provincial Governments, that have passed into our hands—and that too, not wholly. In such circumstances, can we continue our fight for full freedom without being side-tracked from the main issues and without losing much of our pristine zeal, if an important section within our party choose to bury themselves in the details of administration? An *a priori* answer to this question is not of much value and events alone will furnish us the proper reply in the fullness of time. But if the faith of the pro-office party is to be justified, we have to be forewarned and forearmed against the disasters which are likely to overtake us in the near future and to which reference has been made in the first paragraph. My object to-day is to not reopen a question that has been decided once for all by the Supreme Executive

of the Congress, but to indicate some of the rocks of which we have to steer clear, if we intend to further the cause of India's independence while making the most of the new constitution.

The big problems which an Indian statesman will have to tackle are poverty, unemployment, disease and illiteracy. These problems can be successfully solved only by a national government with plentiful resources at its command. Once we have the will to handle these problems, we shall require the organisation and the money to do so. Will the Congress Ministers in the provinces find the necessary organisation and money to undertake nation-building work on a large scale? Regarding organisation, it may be pointed out that the superior services are manned largely by Britishers who have been brought up under a totally different tradition and who will always be conscious that their pay, emoluments and pension are safeguarded in the Constitution beyond the control of the Ministers. Will such officers fall in line with the new policy which Congress Ministers will necessarily enunciate? If they do not, then what will be the fate of the ministers? With the best of intentions, will they be able to struggle successfully against an obstructionist bureaucracy? It will be quite impos-

sible for them to alter the personnel of the higher services because the latter constitute a "reserved" subject which the Ministers cannot touch. The Ministers will therefore have to carry on with them as best as they can, though they may run the risk of seeing their work nullified through their obstructionist policy. Further, several of the provinces will present us with the paradoxical situation of a Congress Government being run largely by British officers and their erstwhile protégés.

The problem of finance is a problem even more formidable. The Congress Party is committed to certain measures which will cut at the sources of governmental revenue and will make it extremely difficult to launch on nation-building work on a large scale. After a reduction in land-rent and the introduction of a prohibitionist policy with regard to excise, the Ministry may even have to face a budget-deficit. In any other country, the Finance Minister would at once set about reducing expenditure. In the Indian provinces, the salary and emoluments of the higher services cannot be touched and the other ranks are generally too ill-paid to leave any room for economy. Consequently, retrenchment in this sphere will be out of the question. Army, Railways, Posts and Telegraphs, Customs, etc.,

being federal subjects, retrenchment in, or increase of income from, any of these departments will not be possible either. None of the provincial Governments can create more money through inflation—which is easily possible in view of the large gold reserve which India has—because currency is also a federal subject. In these circumstances, the only alternative open to a Provincial Government will be to float a big loan for financing nation-building activities. But will the Governor recommend such a loan for the approval of the Provincial Legislative Assembly and will the reactionary Central Government of Lord Linlithgow sanction such a loan, where such sanction is called for under the Constitution? If this is not done, then blank despair is likely to stare the Congress Ministers in the face.

In the light of the above considerations, let us see what tangible good the Congress Ministers can achieve. Firstly, they can release the political prisoners, repeal the repressive laws and ordinances and allow the people to have more freedom. Secondly, they can infuse a new spirit into the provincial administration and set up a new standard of public service for all classes of Government servants and especially the police. Thereby, they may be able to get more work out of the existing officers

and employees of the Government and improve the standard of administration. Thirdly, they can give a fillip to the constructive activities of the Congress by offering governmental co-operation wherever possible. Fourthly, they can give an impetus to indigenous industries and especially to Khadi (handspun and handwoven cloth) by preferring home-made goods to imported stuff when government stores have to be purchased. Fifthly, they can initiate beneficial legislation in several matters (*e.g.*, social welfare, public health, etc.), especially where such legislation does not entail additional expenditure. Sixthly, by a careful distribution of patronage, they can strengthen the nationalist elements in the province and incidentally weaken the reactionary forces. Seventhly, they can undertake a comprehensive economic survey of the provinces with a view to ascertaining the wealth of people, their taxable capacity and the extent of unemployment. Eighthly, they may effect a certain amount of retrenchment in some departments. Ninthly, they can utilise their official position for thwarting the introduction of Federation at the centre. Last but not least, through their example they may exert a wholesome influence on non-Congress ministries in the five other provinces.

But these are, after all piecemeal reforms. They may satisfy the people for a time, but not for long. Before the first year is out, the basic problems—poverty, unemployment, disease, illiteracy, etc., will once again assume serious proportions and demand an urgent remedy. With a reactionary Government at the Centre and with limited provincial finances, will the Congress Ministries be able to cope with the demand? Poverty and unemployment can be tackled only by an improvement of agriculture and a revival of National industries, along with a rapid extension of banking and credit facilities. All this will require more money. For the eradication of disease, large sums of money will be needed in connection with preventive and curative measures on the one hand, and the promotion of sports and physical culture on the other. And the abolition of illiteracy will pre-suppose the introduction of free and compulsory primary education for young and old; which will be possible only when large funds are at the disposal of the ministers.

These fundamental problems, which have not yet been satisfactorily solved by the foremost nations of the day, can be successfully tackled in India only when there is a popular Government in

power at Delhi and there is thorough co-operation between the Central and Provincial Governments. Further it is my firm conviction that the financial needs of a backward and impoverished country like India which has to make up leeway, can never be met by following the principles or conventions of orthodox finance. I can therefore visualise a time in the near future when the Congress Ministers, having gone through a substantial portion of their programme of piecemeal reform, will realise that no further progress is possible until a popular Government is installed at Delhi and there is complete transference of power to the people of the country.

But we need not think that it will be all smooth sailing for the Congress Ministers until we come to this stage. I have already hinted at two difficulties which will dog their footsteps throughout their official career, *viz.*, paucity of finance and the prerogatives of the superior services. The first point does not need any labouring, but I should like to illustrate the second. Take one specific instance, the Indian Medical Service. Under the old scheme, there were 386 Britishers and 263 Indians in the Indian Medical Service. Under the new scheme, the number of Britishers will remain

constant, but the number of Indians will be reduced to 198 and out of this number, there will be 58 officers on Short Service Commission. The basic pay of the I.M.S. officers will be reduced in future, but the Britishers will be more than compensated by an increase in the overseas allowance, which by the way will be denied to Indian members of the Service. Thus under the new scheme, the position of Indian members of the I.M.S. *vis-a-vis* the British members, will be worse than what it is to-day. And to make matters still worse, some of the best districts in the country and some of the best jobs in the Medical Colleges will be reserved for Britishers. Though the Congress Ministers will not be responsible for this state of affairs and though well-informed and educated men will appreciate the helplessness of their position, the man in the street will not absolve the Provincial Government from all blame for its inability to push on with the Indianization of the superior services or to reduce the exorbitant salaries and emoluments which they draw. The Congress Ministers in the six provinces will be in an anomalous position because, while they will nominally be the bosses of the I.M.S. officers, they will not be able to touch a single prerogative belonging to the latter. The position of other branches of the

superior services will be similar to that of the I.M.S.

If such be the prospect before the Congress ministries in the six provinces, one can easily imagine what the record of the ministries in the five other provinces will be, where the majority of the ministers are spineless creatures whose one ambition is somehow to remain in office. In Bengal, for instance, the achievements of the ministry, or rather the non-achievement during the last four months are an augury for the future. They have not yet had the courage to tackle the first item in the programme of any popular ministry, *viz.*, the release of all political prisoners. What then can one expect of that ministry in the matter of handling the difficult jute problem of Bengal on the satisfactory solution of which depend the welfare and prosperity of at least thirty if not forty millions of people?

I remember that when I was in Dublin in February, 1936, I was discussing with the Ministers of Agriculture and Industry, somewhat similar problems, *viz.*, the restriction of beet cultivation in the Irish Free State, its relation to the needs of the sugar-mill industry, and the marketing of the sugar produced in that country. And I then realized how easy it was to solve the jute problem in

Bengal, if only one had a national and democratic government ruling at Calcutta and at Delhi. I believe that a popular ministry in Bengal can achieve much even within the limits of the constitution in solving the jute problem, if it has the courage to fight the vested interests, though it will necessarily be handicapped where additional funds will be required for financing the jute-growers. But, of course, nothing can come out of the present reactionary ministry, which is poor in talent and lacking in courage.

Are we to conclude then that nothing substantial can come out of the policy of accepting ministerial office? Certainly not. Though, unlike the majority of Congressmen to-day, I have no hopes of far-reaching reforms through the instrumentality of Congress ministries, I nevertheless believe that it is possible to utilise the policy of office-acceptance to the fullest extent and advance the cause of Indian independence. But in order to accomplish that, we have to be wide awake and not allow the Congress to degenerate into a glorified Liberal League. There is no lack of people within the Congress who, left to themselves, would like to slide back into the more comfortable path of constitutionalism.

The greatest advantage accruing from office-

acceptance will be that it will inspire the masses with the belief that the Congress is the natural successor to the British Government, and that in the fullness of time the entire governmental machinery in India will pass into the hands of the Congress party. The moral gain resulting from this will be immeasurable, and I consider it far more valuable than any material gain which may fall to our lot through the grace of Congress Ministers. Secondly, for weak-minded Congressmen a taste of power may be a powerful incentive to further activity involving suffering and sacrifice and may engender greater self-confidence. Thirdly, it will enable the Congress to oppose the introduction of Federation, not only from without, but also through the medium of the Provincial Governments—and if as a result of this twofold opposition, the Federal Plan is finally smashed, the Congress will have a feather in its cap.

Last but not least, through office-acceptance, the Congress Ministers will be able to demonstrate to India and to the world from their own administrative experience that there is little scope for far-reaching social reconstruction within the limits of the Constitution of 1935. This experience will prepare the Congress and the country at large,

psychologically, for the final assault on the citadel of reaction at Delhi and Whitehall.

Personally, I shall be more than satisfied if this fourfold result follows from office-acceptance. Those of us who have no faith in office-acceptance as a policy, but have to abide by it as a *fait accompli*, have to warn our countrymen against the talk of a ten-year programme for Congress ministries which has been started by some Congress leaders who may possibly be feeling inclined to accept constitutionalism as a settled policy for the future.

It is gratifying to see that the foremost leaders of the Congress—Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Babu Rajendra Prasad and others—have kept aloof not only from ministerial office, but also from the Legislature. This will be a guarantee that the Congress will not lose itself in the meshes of parliamentary activity and thereby sink into a purely constitutional body. (I am using the word 'constitutional' in its narrow sense). These leaders will see to it that the Congress Ministers are kept in their places and carry out the instructions of the Congress High Command. Above all, the fact that Mahatma Gandhi, in spite of his temporary retirement, is as vigilant as ever, watching events with the closest interest,

will convince everyone that should the occasion arise, as in all probability it may, he will not hesitate to come out into the open once again and calling upon the Congress to discard Constitutional activity, will unfurl the flag of "Mass Satyagraha," so that the Congress may fight its last battle for winning "Purna Swaraj" for India.

## THROUGH CONGRESS EYES

Of the eleven provinces in British India, there is now an absolute or a virtual congress majority in the Legislatures of seven, *viz.*, the United Provinces, Bihar, Orissa, Central Provinces, Madras Presidency, Bombay Presidency, and the Frontier Province. The Congress Party has accordingly taken over the reins of Government in these provinces. In Assam, the Government is in the unenviable position of being repeatedly challenged and defeated in the Assembly, but nevertheless it is not yet in a mood to resign. The Bengal Legislature is a case of "Much bruit, little fruit."

Public attention has up till now been focussed entirely on the six provinces where the Congress has a clear majority. But I maintain that the 'Minority' provinces demand greater attention on the part of the Congress High Command.

Now let us enquire as to why the Congress failed in these provinces.

The position in the Frontier Province is easily understandable. The terrible repression in that

province ever since the exile of the leader, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his worthy brother, Dr. Khan Sahib were responsible for the temporary demoralisation of the Congress Party there. Otherwise, the Congress Party would undoubtedly have come out with a thumping majority. With the returns of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan to his province the position has altered for the better even at this late hour. The 'Minority' Congress party has converted itself into a majority with the help of alliances, thus enabling the Congress Party to step into office, with Dr. Khan Sahib, as the Premier. There is no doubt that within a short time, the Congress Party in the Frontier province will come into its own, for the Frontier Muslims are as good Congress men as can be found anywhere else in India.

Sindh is perhaps the most difficult case to deal with from the Congress point of view. Muslims constitute about 74 per cent. of the population. It is clear, therefore, that until the Muslims join the Congress enthusiastically, as in the adjoining Frontier Province there can be no hope of Congress majority in Sindh. But will that ever be possible? Why not? The present leaders of the two Muslim parties in the Sindh Legislature are representatives of the landed aristocracy. They can never be the

real leaders of the masses. If the Congress Party in Sindh can shed its bourgeois character and convert itself into a peasant's party, the Congress can sweep the polls in that province. If this is not done, a non-Congress peasant's party will emerge, as it has done in Bengal, and the Congress movement will suffer a definite set-back in consequence.

In the Punjab, the Muslims constitute about 56 per cent. of the population but in an Assembly of 175 members they have 86 seats and the Hindus and Sikhs together have 75. If the Congress Party had been strong, then it could have commanded a majority, provided a section of the Muslims had joined it. But the difficulty is a twofold one. Among the Muslim members the Ministerial party (The Unionists) has overwhelming support. And the Congress party is weakened by internal dissensions, while the Sikhs have been pulling in a different direction. If the Congress party can sink its petty squabbles and adopt a radical economic programme which appeals to the masses, regardless of their religious denomination, the Congress Party can still emerge as the dominant political party in the province. Will that be possible? It is difficult to say. The task is an uphill one and much will depend on the quality of leadership which the

province will throw up.

Poor Assam has suffered owing to its proximity to Bengal. The number of general seats (Hindu) has been cut down to 55 in an Assembly of 108 members, while the so-called backward areas and tribes have been given 9 seats and the vested interests 11 seats, largely for the benefit of the European planters. The motive behind the Communal Award (rather Decision) in so far as it related to Assam and Bengal, was to make it impossible for the Congress party to get a majority in these two provinces (*vide* Sir Samuel Hoare's speech in the House of Commons on the 27th March, 1933). Nevertheless, in Assam at least, the Congress Party could have won a majority, but for a fortuitous combination of circumstances. The defection of the erstwhile leader of the Assam Congress, Sjt. T. R. Phookan, damaged the Party and the position was worsened by the untimely death of Sjt. N. C. Bardolai who had succeeded to the leadership. During the election, Assam was completely neglected by the Congress High Command while other provinces like the U. P. came in for a great deal of attention. The future for Assam is far from gloomy—if only the higher authorities of the Congress give some attention to this province.

Even now the present ministry is so unstable that it may be bundled out of office any day. In that event, a coalition ministry, with the Congress as the dominant partner, may step in. But it is to be regretted that during the lifetime of the present Legislature the Congress Party will have to remain in a minority.

And Bengal? The position there is hopeless. With a population of over 44 per cent. the Hindus have 80 seats in an Assembly of 250 (with 30 seats reserved for the scheduled castes) while the Muslims have 119. The vested interests, Europeans and Anglo-Indians have collared as many as 39 seats. Under the present constitution, or rather under the present communal arrangement, the future for the Congress Party in the Bengal Legislature is very dark.

But are we to throw up our hands in despair? That would not be a sign of statesmanship or patriotism. We have to 'radicalise' the Congress and so identify with the interests of the masses as to make it a real mass organisation. Only thus can we cut across communal divisions and frustrate the intentions of the constitution-mongers at Simla and Whitehall. The future for the Bengal Congress lies in converting it into the one organ of the Bengal

peasantry. In that event Congress will once again emerge as the majority party in the Province.

This should have been done five years ago. But better late than never.

## INDIA ABROAD

I think it was the late Deshbandhu C. R. Das, who first opened my eyes to the necessity of making India known in other countries. The occasion for this was the drafting of a new scheme of work for the Swaraj Party which the late Deshbandhu and the late Pandit Motilal Nehru launched at Allahabad in February, 1923. Discussions regarding the new scheme of work had begun as early as April, 1922, when we were all in prison. There were two items in the Deshbandhu's schemes on which he was personally very keen, but which did not evoke much enthusiasm at the time, because public attention was drawn towards the capture of legislatures and local bodies. These two items were—Indian propaganda in foreign countries and the organisation of a pan-Asiatic League.

Several years elapsed before my interest in the question of Indian propaganda abroad was once again stirred up. Early in 1928, when I was in Calcutta I was interviewed by an American journalist (I forget his name at the moment). In the course

of our conversation he described in vivid colours how China had managed to capture the imagination of the whole civilized world. According to him, India should also contrive to put herself before the world's eye. How that could be done, was a question of method for Indians to decide but the need was an imperative one in India's own interest.

Two other factors have helped to deepen my conviction that Indian propaganda abroad is absolutely necessary for India's progress—(1) my experiences in Europe during the last two years and (2) my study of History. During the last two years I have travelled through many countries in Europe. Everywhere there is a colossal ignorance about India—but at the same time there is a general feeling of sympathy for, and interest in, India. This sympathy can easily be enlarged and developed, if necessary steps are taken from our side. But while we are quite indifferent to this question, missionaries and other “civilizing agencies” are not inactive. For several decades they have painted India as a land where widows are burnt, girls are married at the age of 5 or 6 and people are virtually unacquainted with the art of dressing. I remember vividly that when I was in England in 1920, I was one day passing a lecture-

hall in front of which there was a pictorial advertisement of a lecture to be delivered by a missionary about India. In that advertisement, there were pictures of some half-naked men and women of the blackest complexion, possessing the ugliest features. Ostensibly the lecturer wanted to raise funds for his "civilizing" work in India and was therefore painting India in this light, without the slightest compunction. Towards the end of 1933, a German journalist who claimed to have visited India recently, wrote in a Munich paper that she had seen widows being burnt in India and dead bodies lying uncared for in the streets of Bombay. Recently in a Vienna pictorial paper (*Wiener Bilder*, dated the 30th June) a picture of a dead body covered with insects was printed and there was a footnote saying that it was the corpse of a "Sadhu" which could not be removed for several days because of the Hindu belief that the dead body of a "Sadhu" should not be removed by ordinary men. What surprises me is the careful selection of pictures about India made by propagandists in Europe with a view to depicting India in the worst colours possible. This is as much true of pictorial magazines as of films. Regarding the anti-Indian propaganda conducted by films like "India Speaks" and "Bengali"—there

has been some exposure in India already and I need not dilate on it. But I am afraid there has not been sufficient exposure of the mischief which is being done by the film "Everybody Loves Music," in which Mahatma Gandhi appears in his own dress, dancing with a European girl.

If this sort of propaganda goes on in other countries, is it to be wondered at that Indians should be called "Blackie"—as it happens sometimes in England—or as "Neger" (negro)—as is the experience sometimes in Germany? In such circumstances, what should be our reaction? The first and easier course would be to shut our eyes, quietly pocket the humiliation and remain silent. The other and more difficult course would be to start our own propaganda. I remember talking to a Turkish diplomat in 1933 on the question of foreign propaganda. I complained that there was no literature on modern Turkey meant for foreigners, written by Turks themselves. By way of self-defence, he said, that the Turks did not believe in propaganda (this is not wholly true because the Turks also are beginning their propaganda). I doubt if any other country in this age of propaganda, would have attempted to justify its lack of propaganda. In any case, so far as Europe is con-

cerned, propaganda is now regarded as one of the normal and legitimate activities of a Government. Of the European countries, England and Russia are past-masters in the art of propaganda—with Italy and Germany coming next. Of the Asiatic countries, China is at present most active in her foreign propaganda. The New World has generally been indifferent to propaganda in the Old World—but I believe that the League of Nations is now helping to bridge the Atlantic Ocean. In 1934, when I was in Geneva, I happened to come into touch with a number of South Americans and I realized that even the South American States were anxious to carry on propaganda in Europe.

I said towards the beginning that two factors helped to deepen my conviction that Indian propaganda abroad was absolutely necessary for our national advancement: (1) my experiences in Europe and (2) my study of History. Regarding the second, I may say that the study of the history of those countries that have won their freedom in recent years will reveal the importance of this work. I hope my readers are aware of the extensive propaganda conducted in the United States of America by the Sinn Fein Party in 1920 and 1921. The Party sent their best man—no less a man than their

President, Mr. de Valera—to organize and conduct this propaganda. The Party had also centres of propaganda on the Continent. The most important and interesting example of foreign propaganda is, however, furnished by the Czech leaders. For 20 years, Dr. Masaryk, Dr. Benes and others carried on a steady and sustained propaganda in different countries, especially England, France and the United States. Only after two decades could the harvest be reaped—and it will now be admitted on all hands that without the sympathy and support of England, France and the United States, Czecho-Slovakia would not have come into existence as an independent State.

It is not the enslaved countries alone that carry on a systematic propaganda. Even independent countries have now taken to it. Countries like Hungary in Europe and China in Asia that have a national grievance set store by foreign propaganda. Hungary to-day hopes to secure a peaceful revision of her present frontiers which have been defined by the Treaty of Trianon, which she regards as unjust and iniquitous. She is therefore spending large sums of money for winning international sympathy and support for her cause. China has recently launched an extensive scheme of pro-

paganda in Europe with Geneva as her headquarters. There they have taken a Villa and fitted up a Chinese Library for the use of all those who desire to study anything about China. The Society publishes literature in French and English for propagating Chinese culture in Europe. They have taken another house in Geneva where they have periodic exhibitions. In 1934 they had an exhibition of adults' paintings which was a great success. After the Geneva Exhibition, the pictures were sent to other European capitals and similar exhibitions were held there. In April, 1935 when I visited Geneva again, they were holding an exhibition of children's paintings and I was informed that the exhibition would be sent round to other European capitals in succession. Any one visiting such an exhibition would come back with an impression that the Chinese are a highly gifted and cultured people. In November, 1935, an art exhibition was held in Burlington House in London and a ship-load of Chinese art treasures is being brought to London for the purpose. I cannot help remarking in this connection that through her steady and continued propaganda, China has been able to win sympathy of the whole civilized world. This was evident during the Sino-Japanese dispute over Manchukuo,

when China won the support of the League of Nations, in spite of the best efforts of Japan. That China was not able to utilize fully this hard-won support was due to her military weakness. Nevertheless the Chinese people have realized the value of propaganda so much that they have now launched an extensive scheme. Though this scheme is backed by the Nanking Government, a large portion of the funds comes from private individuals.

Even independent countries that have no national grievance devote much attention and money to foreign propaganda. They generally have a twofold aim, cultural and commercial. They desire, on the one hand, to make their culture known to other countries and on the other to develop more trade with them. The propaganda conducted by the British is, in my opinion, more effective than that of other countries, because it is more natural and scientific. The British method of propaganda is roughly as follows:—

(1) News agencies like \* \* \* carry on a subtle propaganda in favour of Great Britain through the manipulation of everyday news.

(2) Britishers make it a point to attend every International Congress which is held in any part of the world.

(3) In every country, special societies exist for developing friendly relations with that country. For example, in Vienna there is a Society called the Anglo-Austrian Friends. Similar organizations exist in every country in Europe and America and all these Societies have corresponding organizations in Great Britain.

(4) A large number of Britishers representing different walks of life go abroad every year to lecture on different aspects of British culture. In this work, British artists play an important role.

(5) Foreigners and foreign students are invited to visit Great Britain. In some cases foreign students are given scholarships.

(6) There are numerous international Societies like the Quakers, the All-Peoples Association, etc., which have their headquarters in London and branches all over Europe—through whose medium a very subtle propaganda is carried on in favour of Great Britain. These Societies generally have a stock of English books in their libraries.

(7) In almost every important city of Europe there is an English-speaking Club. These clubs are invariably centres of propaganda.

(8) Books, etc., about Great Britain are published in every language.

The above propaganda is carried on mostly by non-official agencies, in addition to the official propaganda conducted through Embassies and Consulates. British propaganda is not obstructive and people for whom it is meant, hardly realize that a conscious propaganda is going on. Where it is more overt as in the case of Miss Mayo's "Mother India" or the film "Bengali"—it is conducted through the medium of a third party, so that no one can say that *Britishers* are behind it. As compared with this, German propaganda is crude and obtrusive and it therefore sometimes defeats its own purpose.

During the last two years I have realised from time to time how very sensitive the British people are to any propaganda that is not in keeping with their requirements. One would ordinarily expect such a powerful nation as the British to be quite indifferent to what other people may think or say about them. But the exact contrary is the case. Here I am reminded of the extraordinary step taken by the British Ambassador in Belgrade in June, 1934, in requesting the Foreign Office to stop the Yugo-Slavian papers from publishing interviews with me. I am also reminded of the wrath of Sir Walter Smiles, M. P., over a speech that I

made in Geneva in September, 1933 (Sir Walter Smiles wanted that I should be put in prison on my return to India because of this speech. When I asked him to correct any mis-statements that I might have made therein, he did not reply). Because of her ultra-sensitiveness to foreign opinion, Great Britain is now taking steps to strengthen her propaganda abroad. Recently a Society, called the "British Council of Relations with Foreign Countries" has been started with H. R. H. the Prince of Wales as its patron, for carrying on pro-British propaganda in other countries. Addressing His Royal Highness on the 2nd July, 1935, the Chairman, Lord Tyrell, said that the Society has been started at the instance of the Foreign Office and with the active collaboration of five Government Departments—while the Government Treasury had made a grant of £6,000. *The Daily Telegraph* of London, while giving its whole-hearted support to this endeavour, wrote on the 3rd July as follows:—

"Now France and Italy each budget one million pounds a year for national 'propaganda and prestige'. Japan has recently budgeted one hundred thousand pounds for similar purposes during the coming year and the vast resources of the

German Ministry of propaganda are being expended outside the Reich no less than within. Funds on a much larger scale than £6,000, though not necessarily Government funds, are necessary if we are to take similar interest in making ourselves known."

Coming to India, the question is—what should we do? I am sorry to say in this connection that among the older generation I find a complete lack of appreciation of the utility of Indian propaganda abroad. The opinion expressed by Mr. Bhulabhai Desai and the Editor of *Indian Social Reformer* are typical of what the older generation think. The views of the Congress President, Sjt. Rajendra Prasad, are somewhat more progressive. He welcomes such propaganda, but regrets that the Congress does not possess sufficient means to undertake this work. One is, therefore, left with the feeling that the older generation regard this work as a superfluous luxury and not as an indispensable necessity. If they had regarded it as a necessity, they would certainly have procured funds for it.

Of the Indian leaders, the late Sjt. Vithalbhai Patel was the only one who had a full appreciation of the utility of foreign propaganda and a clear conception as to how it should be carried on. It

is no exaggeration to say that in the cause of this propaganda he laid down his precious life. It was his American tour, in the course of which he delivered 85 speeches, in three months, that damaged beyond repair his already broken health. At the end of this campaign and after mature deliberation with American friends of India, he returned with the conviction that the Indian National Congress should have a permanent representative in the United States. This suggestion was duly conveyed to Mahatma Gandhi. The late Sjt. Vithalbhaj was of opinion that for our propaganda work, we should have our headquarters in Geneva with branches all over Europe and America. One such branch he was able to start during his lifetime in Dublin, under the name of the Indo-Irish League. His journey to Geneva about a month before his sad and premature death, was for the purpose of preparing the ground for a centre there—but fate prevented him from accomplishing this work.

If foreign propaganda be necessary for independent countries as well as for those who fight for their freedom with arms—it is an absolute necessity for countries like India that have discarded the method of physical force and armed revolution. To such a peaceful and constitutional activity,

the British Government, too, can have no objection. We have every right to mobilize world-sympathy on our side in an open and peaceful manner and the British Government have indirectly recognized this right by sponsoring India's membership of the League of Nations, which implies that India has all the rights of a full-fledged nation.

There may be a feeling in certain quarters that foreign propaganda must in all probability be something of a secret or revolutionary or Anti-British character. But such an impression, if it exists anywhere, is altogether without foundation. Propaganda, by its very nature, must be open and above board and propaganda methods are inherently opposed to secret and revolutionary methods. Moreover, this propaganda should not be anti-British but only pro-Indian. I have had some experience of propaganda in Europe and I am definitely of opinion that the moment we attempt anti-British propaganda, we shall defeat our purpose. The British have a vast machinery for their propaganda—including Embassies, Consulates and numerous non-official Associations with which they can counteract our activities. Moreover, if we begin to attack the British, we shall lose sympathy instead of gaining it. On the other hand,

as long as we carry on pro-Indian propaganda, our appeal will be irresistible. And if the British try to thwart our legitimate propaganda, they will automatically put themselves in the wrong and forfeit sympathy everywhere.

In my opinion, Indian propaganda abroad should have the following objectives:—

- (1) To counteract false propaganda about India.
- (2) To enlighten the world about the true conditions obtaining in India to-day.
- (3) To acquaint the world with the positive achievements of the Indian people in every sphere of human activity.

The last objective is the most important, because if we can give the world a good idea of our culture and civilization, we shall automatically dispel false notions regarding the Indian people, raise the status of India in the eyes of the civilized world and obtain sympathy everywhere.

To accomplish this threefold purpose, the following steps, among others, may be taken:—

- (1) Indians should be induced to attend every International Congress.
- (2) Articles about India should be written in foreign newspapers and journals.
- (3) Books about India should be published in

the different languages of Europe and America.

(4) There should be at least one well-equipped library in some central place in Europe to which reference could be made by all those who are interested in India.

(5) Prominent Indians representing different aspects of Indian culture should regularly travel abroad.

(6) Films about India should be exhibited abroad.

(7) Lectures on India with the help of magic lantern slides should be organized in foreign countries.

(8) Foreign scholars should be invited to India and they should be helped to make contact with the best type of Indians.

(9) In every country, mixed Societies of Indians and nationals of that country, should be organized for developing closer cultural relations with India. Every such Society should have a corresponding organization in India. An instance of the first is the Indo-Czecho-Slovakian Society.

(10) Such mixed Societies should also be formed everywhere for fostering closer commercial relations between India and other countries. (An instance of this is the Indian-Central European

Society of Vienna.) Corresponding organizations should be started in India.

(11) Mixed Chambers of Commerce (*e.g.*, Indo-Czecho-Slovak Chamber of Commerce, Indo-Italian Chamber of Commerce, Indo-Austrian Chamber of Commerce, etc.) should be organized in every important Capital. Corresponding Chambers of Commerce should be started in India. Such mixed Chambers of Commerce exist in every European country. India alone has not yet realized the importance of this.

(12) Regular assistance should be given to such bodies as the International Committee for India in Geneva which have so far been working independently. There are several organizations of this sort in Europe and America. Some sort of co-ordination should be established among such Societies.

The impression that has been created in many circles all over the world as a result of prolonged hostile propaganda is that we are an uncivilized people—that our women are enslaved and that we are not a nation, as our Society is seething with dissensions. Can we shut ourselves up in a room and remain indifferent to what the world thinks of us? We cannot. For good or for ill, we are

forced by modern circumstances to share the common life of humanity. We cannot therefore be indifferent to what the outside world thinks of us. Moreover, we can see with our own eyes what other nations are achieving through a course of systematic propaganda. History further teaches us that for enslaved and suppressed nations—especially for those that eschew the path of violence—the sympathy of the civilized world is absolutely necessary and in order to win that sympathy, propaganda has to be undertaken. Distinguished Indians, like Swami Vivekanand, Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi have in the past done a certain amount of propaganda abroad and their work has been supplemented by foreign friends of India. As a result of this, India still has a reputation for an ancient culture and civilization. But if we are to make further progress, it is indispensably necessary that a systematic propaganda, backed by the Indian people, should be undertaken. There are Indians abroad who are determined to do this work with the limited resources at their disposal. The only question is whether the Indian National Congress will take charge of this all-important work and do it in a more effective and efficient manner.

## LABOUR IN JAMSHEDPUR—THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PICTURE

The article from the pen of Mr. J. L. Keenan, the General Manager of the Tata Iron and Steel Works of Jamshedpur, in "The Modern Review" for December, 1935, is interesting for more reasons than one. It is interesting for the digressions from the steel-making into the domain of historical and sociological research—interesting for the placid self-complacency which inspires the writer—interesting also for the many contradictions in which the article abounds.

A word about historical and sociological matters. When Mr. Keenan talks about steel-production, he is on solid ground and his self-confidence is an asset. When he digresses into the thorny domain of Ancient History or Sociology, his self-confidence becomes a handicap. Says Mr. Keenan:—"He (J. N. Tata) realized that India from the time of Manu was condemned to be a country of capitalists and slaves" (P. 705). It is a truism in economics that capitalism is a recent

growth in consequence of the advent of large-scale production. How there could have been a capitalist order at the time of Manu and after, passes my comprehension. Even landlordism as we see it to-day in India is a recent growth. Further, even the state in ancient times did not amass wealth—the prevalent idea being that the state (whether monarchy or a republic) should give everything to the people. A typical example of this was King Harshavardhana, who emptied the Royal treasury once in five years.

Then Mr. Keenan goes on to say:—"We (Tata) know that in India before his time the mere name of a labourer must be expressive of contempt." (P. 705). If Mr. Keenan has used the word "labourer" in the sense of artisan, he is mistaken. The artisans in the Indian village economy—whether carpenters or blacksmiths or potters—were never looked down upon with contempt. They were indispensable elements of the village economy and their relations with the rest of the village population were perfectly friendly and cordial. Labourers in the sense of industrial proletariat are an excrescence of capitalism and not an Indian phenomenon as such. If labourers (industrial proletariat) are looked down upon in India, similar is the case in

other countries. I have heard from Indian apprentices in European factories that the gulf which separates workmen from officers in European factories is very wide.

Mr. Keenan is also wrong when he goes on to say "that a labourer was as a rule forbidden to accumulate wealth and, though he was a slave, even if his master gave him freedom, he was still a slave" (P. 705). I wonder from where Mr. Keenan culled this valuable piece of information. We know, on the contrary, that in India low-born people often rose to the highest positions by dint of their personal qualities. If we investigate the past history of some of the present Maharajas and landed aristocrats, useful information can be collected in this connection. I may also point to examples like that of the alleged Kaivarta Kings of Bengal, who came from a so-called low stratum of society.

The distinction, between "Labour of Necessity" and "Labour of Progress" which Mr. Keenan has drawn is artificial and if I may say so, fantastic. Even in ancient times, all labour was not labour of necessity. People did not work only for hunger, nor did they always get starvation wages. Most people worked partly because of hunger, and partly because of the pleasure in working; and it is too

much to say that labour in the good old days was always sweated. The huge monuments of art that still live—Mohenjodaro, Harappa, Taj Mahal, Madura, Kanarak—do they not represent labour of progress as well? It is true that industries in the old days did not pay huge dividends as they sometimes do now. But we have to remember that huge dividends are exclusively the product of the industrial revolution—that is of large-scale production. Moreover, this phenomenon of huge dividends can hardly be called an advantage or an achievement. Thinking men everywhere are now coming to admit that the evils resulting from industrial capitalism are due largely to the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few, and to abnormally large dividends which are gathered either at the cost of sweated labour or at the cost of the exploited consumer in colonial or semi-colonial countries.

Mr. Keenan transgresses the limits of decency when he refers to President Roosevelt “assisted by a group of asinine Professors” trying to find a way out of the present depression. I do not hold any brief for President Roosevelt nor does the noble President stand in need of it. But is there anyone who can deny that the biggest experiment to end

unemployment and depression that is going on in the world to-day outside Russia is in the U. S. A. ? I would refer the writer to the excellent treatise written by Mr. H. G. Wells, *The New American in New World*, in which he discusses the American experiment and compares it with the Russian. Incidentally Mr. Wells refers therein to the question as to why President Roosevelt sought the help of some professors, whom Mr. Keenan in his self-complacency calls "asinine." Possibly what has annoyed Mr. Keenan is that President Roosevelt is laying his hands on the large dividends with a view to dividing them, in part at least, among the exploited proletariat and that he (President Roosevelt) maintains that the employers should recognise organized trade-unions and treat them as equals.

Mr. Keenan is not only self-complacent, he is more. He says that "as far as making steel in India is concerned that Company (Tatas) has ended the depression in that trade and I think that Company should be proud of this fact" (P. 707). But let me ask Mr. Keenan what after all, "ending depression under a capitalist system" means. It means finding more markets and also sufficient capital to keep a concern going until more markets are found. The huge bounties given by the Indian people

through the Government of India in the lean years helped the Company to keep going until more markets or orders could be found. That the Company to-day is able to make more profits is due to two factors: firstly, the duties imposed on foreign—specially continental—steel, which make it possible for the people to patronise Tatas, and secondly the orders directly placed by the Government of India with the Tata Iron and Steel Company. It is therefore the people and the Government of India who are really responsible for ending the depression in the steel trade—if really it has ended. Mr. Keenan has not a word of thanks for either of them, though he congratulates the Company, and therefore himself, for the recent improvement.

I happen to know something about Tatas since September, 1928, and I should like to enquire if the Tata Iron and Steel Company would have been alive to-day but for the heavy state-bounties which kept the Company going during the lean years and provided the fat salaries for the coveted officers at a time when thousands of workmen were thrown into the streets, without unemployment, dole, or insurance benefit. I should also like to enquire if the Company would have been able to end the depression, as the General Manager

claims it has done, without the aid of the heavy duties levied on imported steel and without the sympathy and support of the public and the Government of India.

The confusion of thought which the writer shows in some places is pathetic, and makes one wish, that he would devote more attention to the study of economics than to history and sociology. Here is a specimen of his reasoning:—"In 1929 and in 1930, our monthly staff with the exception of a few whom you could count on the fingers of two hands, were 'labourers of progress.' The Steel Company earned dividends last year and this Steel Company, rightly, paid their 'labourers of progress' a reward for their extra effort which they had put forth" (P.707). A perusal of the above would lead one to think that the financial improvement of the Company was due to improvement in the work put forth by the employees in 1931 and after. The fact is that the financial improvement was due solely to the larger orders secured by Tatas, as explained in the previous paragraph. If one were to go round and examine one employee after another, one would not find any difference between his work in 1929-30 and his work in 1931-33. I clearly remember that in 1929 and 1930 the General

Manager used to complain of lack of orders which forced him to reduce wages—to order sweeping retrenchment and to shut down certain departments of the Tata Iron and Steel Company in Jamshedpur.

The writer remarks in one place as follows:—  
“At the present time, in my opinion, due to economic factors, the entire labour of the steel world, with the exception of the labour in the Tata Iron and Steel Company Ltd., have forgotten that they are ‘Labour of Progress’ and they are ‘Labour of Necessity.’ . . . . . There is nobody in the United States of America to-day, in my opinion, at least in the ranks of Labour, who are attempting to get out of the category of ‘Labour of Necessity.’ . . . . . There is no doubt that each and everyone of us realise that we have had a depression from 1928 until 1933 in India. The same depression exists in other countries. The Tata Iron and Steel Company, in my estimation, is the only company in the steel trade which has advanced. . . .”  
(P.706-7).

The above statements would lead one to expect that Jamshedpur has become a paradise for steel-workers—an object lesson for steel companies in other parts of the world. But what are the facts ?

Earlier in the article the writer states that American steel workers are the best paid in the world. Quoting a report of the American Iron and Steel Institute dated the 30th January, 1935, the writer says:—"American workers. . . . earned an average of 64.7 cents an hour in November 1934. . . . The Japanese wage rate was 9.7 cents per hour and in India 8.6 cents per hour in 1933." (The figure for European countries are in the neighbourhood of 25 cents per hour). If the average for India is one-eighth of that of the United States of America and if the Tata Iron and Steel Company is by far the biggest steel industry in India, I think the General Manager of Tatas should hang his head down in shame instead of indulging in meaningless bragging.

That the writer was conscious of his Company's shortcomings when he first sat down to write is clear from the following remarks on p. 705:—"We think we are doing good work; we brag about our hospitals; we boast about our wages paid, but do we stop to think and make a comparison between India and Europe or America? I certainly can state that we do not. . . . . We must compare the emoluments we pay our workmen with the wages that are paid in Europe."

I shall now come to the more serious charges that can be levelled against the Tata Iron and Steel Company. These charges are under the following heads:—

- (1) Their attitude towards Indianization.
- (2) Their inefficiency in the matter of checking wastage.
- (3) Their attitude towards Labour.

I should preface my remarks under the above three heads with the statement that the Directors of Tatas always claim that theirs is a “national” industry and on this ground they have taken the fullest advantage of the sympathy of the unsophisticated public. But I shall presently show that Tatas’ concern in Jamshedpur is much less “national” than even the textile mills of the Indian industrial magnates for whom “nationalism” or “patriotism” is often a convenient excuse for robbing the public.

When the Steel Company was first started about 25 years ago, a large number of foreigners, mostly Americans and Britons, were appointed to the higher posts on a covenant. They were given princely salaries with equally princely bonus—and I know of cases in which the bonus was even higher than the salary and was independent of production

or profit. If I mistake not, the General Manager himself draws Rs.10,000/- a month—equal to what the Governors of the major provinces in India get. The public were given to understand that as soon as a sufficient number of Indians would be trained, they would take the place of the covenanted officers. This promise has not been redeemed. Between 1928 and 1931, we made repeated requests for Indianisation but without much success. The position to-day is that in many departments Indians are doing the same work as covenanted foreigners but at half or one-third the total emoluments enjoyed by the latter. Moreover, during this period, when I was in close contact with the General Manager, I complained that the contracts of several covenanted officers were being renewed for a further period, though there were competent Indians to take their place—but to no purpose. If an impartial investigation were made to-day into the number of foreigners employed at Jamshedpur and the emoluments they draw—the Tata Iron and Steel Company would stand condemned.

Tata Iron and Steel Company is undoubtedly a very big concern and therefore there should be very close supervision in order to prevent wastage. But on this point, too, the situation is far from

satisfactory. The Directors are all absentees and have very little knowledge of the inner working of the concern. They are all busy men with several irons in their fire and have not even the desire or leisure to know more of the working of the Jamshedpur machinery. The result is that the actual working of the vast machinery is left in the hands of foreigners who have no responsibility to anyone except the absentee Board which is entirely under their thumb. I first realized the helplessness of the Board when I had to discuss the terms of settlement on behalf of the strikers in September, 1928. If on any point the General Manager said "yes", the Board would consent. If, on the contrary, the General Manager said "no"—it was also "no" from the Board.

That a settlement did take place after all was due to the fact that the then General Manager, Mr. Alexander, felt disposed to welcome it. Not long after settlement, I once suggested to the Chairman of the Board of Directors that he and the Board should have more contact with the workmen and for that purpose, it would be good for him to go round the works without being chaperoned by the Company's officials. The Chairman seemed agreeable to my proposal but my suggestion could

not be given effect to, because the General Manager was opposed to it. Nevertheless, the Board began to realize their position, I think, because not long after that, they sent one of the Directors to Jamshedpur—and later on to Calcutta—to act as a liaison officer between the Board and the Management. Since his appointment, there has been some administrative tightening-up in Jamshedpur. And in Calcutta and elsewhere most of the papers have been won over with the help of advertisements, with the result that to-day one finds very little criticism of Tata Iron and Steel Company in the nationalist press. But the real trouble—*viz.*, wastage and inefficiency—continues.

The above-mentioned Director is an ex-I. C. S. and an able administrator—but he lacks technical knowledge without which it is impossible to force the hands of the Management. One of the results of this is that in the matter of Indianisation the progress so far made has been unsatisfactory. There are any number of covenanted officers whose places could easily be filled up by competent Indians, at a much lower rate of pay. I have quoted above the average Indian wage-rate as being 8.6 cents per hour for the year 1933. But if we exclude the highly paid foreigners, there can be no

doubt that the average would fall much lower.

The top-heavy administration represents, however, a small item in the wastage that has been going on in Jamshedpur. If one would go over the stores department and see the amount of capital lying uselessly idle there, and would also examine the annual orders that are sent out for machinery, spare parts, etc., one would have some idea of the wastage that goes on in Jamshedpur. About 7 or 8 years ago, the services of the Indian Chief Electrical Engineer—one of the most popular officers of the Company—were suddenly dispensed with and a foreigner was imported in his place. Then followed a period during which wastage took place in the Electrical Department owing to faulty and unscientific methods of handling. Fuel-consumption is another important source of wastage. For a huge concern like Tata Iron and Steel Company, it is absolutely necessary to make use of the latest scientific devices for reducing fuel-consumption and also to carry on continuous research in this matter. But Tata Iron and Steel Company are backward in this respect. It is because of wastage combined with top-heavy administration that the Tata Iron and Steel Company cannot stand on its own legs and must always depend on the state for

either bounties or protective duties. In a country where labour is so cheap, any well-organized steel concern should be able to maintain itself without being spoon-fed by the state. There are independent concerns in Jamshedpur which buy raw materials like scrap-iron (or electrical power) from Tatas and make a profit out of their products, only because they avoid wastage and top-heavy administration.

The last—and to our purpose the most important point to which I shall refer is the attitude of the Tata Iron and Steel Company towards labour. The first trade union was organized in Jamshedpur in 1920 and by that time so many grievances had accumulated that the years 1921-22 witnessed serious labour-trouble there. About this time, the late Deshbandhu C. R. Das's sympathy was drawn towards the Jamshedpur workers and as long as he was alive, he gave them the fullest support. But this support was of no avail until the Swaraj Party emerged as the most powerful element in the Indian Legislative Assembly in the 1923 elections. Deshbandhu Das was joined by Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Motilal Nehru and Tatas then found it necessary to come to terms with these nationalist leaders because the Assembly

would soon consider the question of a state-bounty for Tata Iron and Steel Company. Tatas then agreed to recognize the trade union (called the Labour Association), to collect the union subscription on pay-day and generally to ameliorate the condition of the workers. For some time, the position of the workers saw a decided improvement but after the death of Deshbandhu, things began to grow worse again.

Deshbandhu's place was taken by Mr. C. F. Andrews who kept the flag flying with the moral support of the Congress Party in the Assembly—but the unsympathetic and callous behaviour of the Company's officials led to a serious strike in 1928. Since then the Company's attitude towards labour has been one which would be worthy not of a "national" industry but of the worst bureaucratic Government. My connection with Jamshedpur labour began in August 1928, when the strikers and their leader, Mr. Homi, put irresistible pressure on me to espouse their cause. When the Company found themselves in a very difficult situation as a result of my joining the strikers, they agreed to accept the demand of the workers but only on condition that the Company did not have to negotiate with Mr. Homi, against whom personally,

they said, they had many grievances. Mr. Homi at first agreed to stand out if a settlement helpful to the workers could be arrived at thereby. But when the settlement was actually drawn up and ratified by the workers at a mass-meeting, he changed his mind and set up a new organization to oppose the settlement.

Soon after the settlement the Company refused to give effect to some of the important terms, as a result of which a large number of the workers went over to Mr. Homi's party. For a few months the Company refused to recognize Mr. Homi's organization but one fine morning their tactics were changed. Their erstwhile enemy Mr. Homi was invited by the General Manager and his organisation was recognized. The old organization, Labour Association, was ignored and those who had drawn up the settlement and had stood loyally by it were left alone. After some time the scene changed once again. Prosecution was launched against Mr. Homi under various charges, and he found himself in prison; with the disappearance of Mr. Homi, his organization became a shut-up shop.

The withdrawal of the Congress Party from the Assembly in January, 1930, led to a definite stiffening of the Company's attitude towards the work-

ers. After Mr. Homi's imprisonment, whenever a worker's meeting was held, a band of goondas armed with sticks and other weapons would appear on the scene and break up the meeting by force. In 1931, I was presiding at such a meeting which was broken up in this way and I can therefore speak from personal experience. This situation continued for some years and even in 1934, things were so bad in Jamshedpur that during a visit to that town, Mahatma Gandhi was constrained to remark in a public meeting that he was "grieved to learn that the issues between the employers and the employed were being settled at the point of the lathi."

It can be alleged on behalf of the workers that since 1930, the Company has been following a ruthless policy towards them. Recognition was withdrawn from both the workers' organisations—the collection of subscriptions on pay-day was discontinued and employees connected with the trade-union movement were either victimized or transferred to places far away from Jamshedpur. In January, 1934, when the local Government officials in Jamshedpur prosecuted a gang of about 40 goondas, high officials of Tatas were found to take interest in the affair for settling the matter out of court.

The climax was reached in 1935, when the Company served a notice on the Labour Association demanding arrears of rent for 4 years for the premises used by the Secretary and by the office—though 4 years ago, a clear understanding had been arrived at between me and the Managing Director, Mr. Dalal, that the Company would waive their claim for rent. The Company thought that the Association would not be able to pay and could thereupon be ejected and since all the houses in Jamshedpur are virtually owned by the Company, the Association would cease to exist for want of a habitation. The Secretary of the Association went so far as to offer to pay rent in future and also to pay the arrears by instalments—but the Company refused to accept any compromise, proving thereby that what they really wanted was not rent, but the liquidation of the trade-union organization in Jamshedpur.

The Company were going on merrily with their game when suddenly the Congress Party decided once again to enter the Indian Legislative Assembly. The Company knew from experience that two or three M. L. A.'s were in the habit of raising inconvenient questions about their treatment of labour, and they felt it advisable to change their

tactics once again. A new group called the Metal Workers' Union, thereupon came into existence under the Company's patronage and the workmen in the factories were advised by the officials to join this group. This group is still in the good books of the Company, and one of its principal activities is to give tea-parties to Government and Company officials and to wait on deputation on the General Manager. The object of this new policy on the part of the Company is to show to critics in the Assembly and elsewhere that Tata Iron and Steel Company do not suppress all trade-union activity.

I have dealt at length on the attitude of the Company towards organized labour and shall now say a few words about their treatment of the individual workers. I have before me a printed copy of the memorandum submitted by the Metal Workers' Union (which in Jamshedpur is called a "Company's Union") to the General Manager which contains the following remarks:

"The service conditions of the majority of the workers employed in the Tata Iron and Steel Company are not sound as many of them are given notices of discharge, compulsory leave, etc., without sufficient consideration. For example, the

workers of the old Rolling Mills who have long service with the Company and who have contributed towards bringing the Company to the present position it occupies among its sister industries . . . . . are laid off on compulsory leave . . . . .

The Company recently started a policy of employing men "temporary" and it is interesting to note that this "temporary" has no limited period. Cases of such men who have put in more than two years of service are not uncommon. By this, the Company is able to save a good deal by non-payment of bonuses and non-extension of privileges according to Works Service Rules, Provident Fund, etc., which can be enjoyed only by permanent employees. . . . .

Suspension of a worker from his duty extending to weeks is common. In spite of several rulings of the Management to afford a chance to the worker to defend a charge brought against him, the rules are either not followed in several cases, or prompt attention is not paid to the explanation submitted by the party. . . . . Similar remarks would apply to such other exemplary punishment such as reduction of salaries. . . . .

There is no regular system by which employees

can get promotions and increments in their wages. For some time past it has become a policy of the Company to abolish as far as practicable higher rated posts, when vacant and lower rated men are made to undertake the extra work without adequate compensation. . . . .

While we appreciate the spirit of encouragement underlying the Bonus schemes, we feel it has been restricted only to some workers. Then again a distinction has been made between Operating and Maintenance Department in respect of Departmental bonuses. . . . .

The system of weekly paid labour was introduced when the Company was in need of men to do some seasonal work. But for some time past we find weekly labour is employed in permanent force in certain departments whose total number at Jamshedpur comes to about 5000 (including both male and female labour) thus forming about 20 per cent of the total number of employees. Most of such employees have already put in service of over 5 years. *Most of such weekly paid labourers get rates varying from 5 annas to 8 annas per day.* According to the following statistics showing the minimum of expenditure for a family of 5 members as shown in the Report of the Royal Commission on Labour,

it will be clear that the cost of living at Jamshedpur is by far higher than that of the two places quoted—Sholapur and Ahmedabad. . . .” (Then follows the statistics showing that the monthly expenses in Sholapur come up to Rs.37-13-11 and in Ahmedabad to Rs.39-5-8. But 5000 Jamshedpur workers get a daily wage varying from 5 annas to 8 annas).

In view of the above statements made— not by hot-headed agitators—but by a loyal “Company’s Union,” may I ask Mr. Keenan how many “labourers of progress” there are in Jamshedpur? I am afraid that excluding the General Manager and the covenanted officers very few Indian employees could be classified as “labourers of progress.”

The only portion of the article for which I feel thankful is where the writer refers to the appalling condition of the workers in the Tata Mines. I do hope that with the sympathy of Mrs. Keenan behind him, the General Manager will be able to bring about an increase in the wages of the poor mine-workers.

The writer has evidently referred to the iron-ore mines only. But what about the coal mines? A few years ago when I was working as the President of the Tata Collieries Labour Association

I happened to look into the conditions in the Tata coal mines. At that time some mines were being closed down, and thousands of workers were being thrown out of employment. We naturally wanted the mines to continue working, but two arguments were urged by the Company in opposition to our demand—firstly, that the Company had long-term contracts with some collieries, and after taking this supply, the Company did not require an additional supply from their own mines; and secondly, that the cost of production in the Company's mines was rather higher as compared with the prevailing market rate.

It is difficult for an outsider to understand why the Company went in for long-term unprofitable contracts and at the same time invested capital in buying collieries. Firstly, it was wrong to go in for long-term unprofitable contracts. Secondly, if they did go in for them, they should not have bought any collieries. Thirdly, once they started working these collieries, they should not have shut down—because it costs a lot of money to keep mines in proper order when they are not working. Fourthly, there is no reason why they should have had a top-heavy administration in the Collieries Department also—and thereby put up the cost of

production. The result of all this inefficiency is that the people and the state have to pay for the sins of the Company and the Indian workers have to be content with low wages.

If Tata's employees at Jamshedpur are to become "Labourers of Progress" then the top-heavy administration has to be rectified, the covenanted officers have to be got rid of and wastage and inefficiency have to be eliminated. The paltry bonus thrown at a section of the ill-paid Indian employees for their last year's work does not appreciably alter the position of the workers in Jamshedpur, nor does it entitle the Company to claim that they are better employers of labour than any other.

*Vienna, 31st December, 1935.*

## FIFTY YEARS OF INDO-BRITISH TRADE (1875-1925)

### I

One of the most remarkable facts in connection with the growth of the foreign trade of India is that the percentage share of the United Kingdom has almost continuously been on the decline for the last fifty years or more, though the actual amount of Indo-British trade has shown very great development. This means that the progress of Indo-British trade has not kept pace with that of our total trade; in other words, trade with non-British countries has grown at a faster rate than that with Great Britain. Till the middle of the 19th century, the growth of one foreign commerce was practically synonymous with the development in our trade with the United Kingdom.

It lies beyond the scope of the present article to trace the beginnings of our commerce with Great Britain which led to her occupying the almost monopolistic position in India's foreign

trade.\* The subsequent developments have been in the direction of a gradual divergence of both our imports and exports from the United Kingdom to other countries, especially the Continental countries of Europe, and to U. S. A. and Japan with the result as noted above. The following figures are illustrative of the fact :

PERCENTAGE SHARE OF U. K. IN THE  
TOTAL TRADE OF INDIA

1875-76	..	..	..	62.2
1880-81	..	..	..	58.7
1890-91	..	..	..	50.9
1900-01	..	..	..	45.1
1905-06	..	..	..	42.9
1910-11	..	..	..	39.1
1915-16	..	..	..	47.4 <sup>†</sup>
1920-21	..	..	..	41.8
1925-26	..	..	..	32.1

\* For this earlier history of Indo-British trade, good accounts will be found in Dr. Balkrishna's *Commercial Relations between India and England* and Prof. C. J. Hamilton's *Trade Relations between England and India*.

† During the War period, a temporary stimulus was given to Indo-British trade by the large exports of Indian raw materials for the manufacture of munitions.

This decline in the percentage share of the United Kingdom has been more marked in our export trade. It is true that the share of Great Britain has always been larger in our imports than in our exports; but smaller as the volume of exports has been, its decline has still been relatively more marked than that of imports, as the following figures will reveal:

PERCENTAGE SHARE OF U. K. IN INDIA'S  
IMPORT AND EXPORT TRADE

			Import	Export
1875-76	..	..	83.0	48.3
1880-81	..	..	82.8	41.6
1890-91	..	..	76.4	32.7
1900-01	..	..	65.6	30.7
1905-06	..	..	68.5	25.1
1910-11	..	..	62.1	24.8
1915-16	..	..	60.4	38.1
1920-21	..	..	58.8	19.4
1925-26	..	..	50.9	21.0

In our imports, Great Britain continued to retain more than half the total trade and occupied by far the most important position, the share of the country coming next after her, namely, Japan,

being only 8 per cent in 1925-26. But as a consumer of Indian goods, she had long ceased to hold a similar position. Japan and the U. S. A. followed her at close quarters, the percentage shares of U. K., Japan and the U. S. A. in India's export trade being respectively 21.0, 15.0 and 10.4 in the year 1925-26.

## II

The causes of this decline in the percentage share of the United Kingdom in India's foreign trade are not far to seek. The pre-eminence of that country in the earlier days was due to a number of peculiar facilities which she enjoyed in her relations with India.\* She was politically supreme in this country. Our trade had to depend almost entirely on British shipping; most of the exporting and importing firms were British concerns; so were the exchange banks and insurance companies. The railways of India were mostly built up with British capital and conducted by British companies who furthered the interests of British commerce.†

\* Cf. Dr. S. G. Panandikar's *Economic Consequences of the War for India*, pp. 66—67; also Prof. R. M. Joshi's *Indian Export trade*, pp. 160—61 and 164.

† Incidentally, the growth of railways stimulated imports from U. K. as all the materials for railway construction were purchased from there.

Many of the agricultural industries (some of them with British capital) were initiated and developed with a view to supplying the British market (*e.g.*, tea, coffee).

The agricultural policy of the Government was also directed to the encouragement of the cultivation of such raw materials and food grains as jute, cotton, wheat and oilseeds with the object of stimulating their export to Britain. On the other hand, the United Kingdom was the foremost industrial country of the world, supplying most of the demands of India for manufactured goods, in some of which (*e.g.*, cotton manufactures) the imports were directly encouraged by the tariff legislation of the Government of India, indirectly restricting the growth of those manufacturing industries in India that were likely to hinder the progress of our import trade with that country.

The preponderance of the United Kingdom in our foreign trade was, therefore, the outcome of a combination of two causes; the political and economic subordination of India to that country, and the industrial supremacy of Great Britain among the countries of the world.

Subsequently, direct trade connections came to be established with almost all the important coun-

tries of the world; and with the gradual progress of trade with them, Britain's share has steadily declined. This growth of Indian trade with non-British countries was no doubt made possible by the free trade policy pursued by the British Government in relation to the Indian market. The specific reasons will be found in the fact that while in the first half of the 19th century, the United Kingdom was the only great industrial country, the subsequent industrial developments in countries like Germany, U. S. A., and Japan have resulted in larger quantities of manufactured goods being imported from them, mostly at the expense of Great Britain.

On the other hand, these industrially developed countries have found in India a veritable storehouse of raw materials with which to foster their manufacturing industries. But the keen competition which they had to meet in capturing the Indian market from British hands for their own commodities was absent in the case of the purchase of raw materials from India. For, while the progress in our imports from other countries was being fought against and restricted at every step by Britain, India could sell her raw produce to any country which offered her the best price. It was,

therefore, comparatively easier for the non-British countries to show greater developments in consuming Indian goods than in replacing British imports by their own manufactures.

Hence, with the economic advancement of non-British countries and the establishment of commercial relations with them, our trade was diverted more and more towards these countries.

### III

From the above, it should not be supposed that there was an actual decline in the amount of Indo-British trade. On the other hand, the United Kingdom showed the greatest progress in the net addition to the amount of trade transacted between India and any other country, as the following figures will indicate:

	VALUE IN LAKHS OF RUPEES		
	Exports to the U.K.	Imports from the U.K.	Total amount of the Indo- British trade
1875-76	2809	3228	6037
1880-81	3105	4403	7508
1890-91	3227	5502	8779
1900-01	3205	5310	8516
1905-06	4070	7685	11755

	Exports to the U.K.	Imports from the U.K.	Total amount of the Indo- British trade
1910-11	5224	8311	13533
1915-16	7600	8352	15952
1920-21	5297	20460	25757
1925-26	8097	11532	19629

Thus, during the period 1875-76 to 1925-26, the amount of our trade with Britain increased by about 136 crores of rupees, an amount which was in itself greater than that transacted with any other country. The gradual decline in the percentage share of the United Kingdom was, therefore, due to her inability to keep pace with the general growth of India's total trade, the extent of which can further be gauged from the following index numbers :

	Total Indian trade	Indo-British trade
1875-76	100	100
1880-81	131	124
1890-91	177	145
1900-01	194	141
1905-06	282	194
1910-11	354	224
1915-16	348	264
1920-21	634	426
1925-26	630	325

As has already been observed, the preponderance of Great Britain has been more complete in India's import trade. This has been reflected in the fact that our total imports have shown identical movements with those from the United Kingdom. Fluctuations in the imports from that country in either direction have invariably been followed by similar fluctuations in our total imports. This has, however, not been the case with the exports which have shown contrary movements in some particular years to those from the United Kingdom. This is, of course, due to the exports to Britain being only a fraction of our total exports. But the supremacy of that country has been so complete in India's import trade that irrespective of the developments with other countries, our total imports have in every year moved along with those from Britain.

The outstanding article of importance that has contributed to the bulk of our import trade with Great Britain is cotton manufactures. England is the greatest cotton manufacturing country in the world, and India has been her best customer. Indeed, India occupies the foremost place among countries importing cotton piece-goods. This single article has represented more than 50 per

cent of India's total imports from the United Kingdom.

The other articles of importance are metals, machinery and mill-work, and railway plant and rolling-stock. Each of these amounted to more than ten crores of rupees in the latest years of the period under study. Besides these, there is a host of other minor articles. The bulk is, however, made up of cotton goods, metals and manufactures thereof, and the progress of Indo-British trade has been mainly limited to these commodities.

Besides the facts that the exports to Britain have represented a smaller value than the imports therefrom and that the progress in them has been slower than in the latter, there is another point of contrast to be noted. On the import side, cotton goods have represented the bulk of the trade; whereas on the export side, there has been no such predominant article. On the contrary, while the important articles of import kept up their relative positions all through, those of export underwent the greatest changes in their growth and relative importance.

In the earlier days, raw cotton occupied the first place among the objects of export. Right down to 1884-85, the output and export of which

were being highly encouraged by the establishment and progress of the jute manufacturing industry in Dundee, held the first place. Then, the export of tea which was fast driving away the Chinese stuff from the British market along with the rapid growth of the newly-established Indian industry, took the place of honour for the first time in 1890-91. Thus in 1890-91, tea, food-grains, raw jute and cotton respectively occupied the first four places, the value of the exports of each of these being between 4 and 5 crores of rupees.

Since then, while the exports of raw cotton fell heavily, amounting to only 21 lakhs of rupees in 1899-1900, those of the other three commodities continued to grow in volume; and for the next few years, these were interchanging the first three places amongst themselves. By the end of the century, tea, however, came definitely to hold the foremost place; and though in certain abnormal years, the exports of food-grains exceeded those of tea, the latter have since then continued to hold the premier position. This rising preponderance of tea in relation to food-grains and jute was due to the following causes.

India herself being a densely-populated

country, subject to shortage of crops and famines, the exports of grains could show expansion only within certain limits and were liable to great fluctuations. In the case of jute, the growth of the manufacturing industry in India and elsewhere restricted the exports to the United Kingdom. But tea was not subject to any of these influences. The home consumption was negligible and there was no great demand from other countries. The industry was started and fostered with a view to supply the demands of Britain which has continued to be almost the single market for Indian tea, the exports to other countries being quite small. Had it not been for tea, the exports to the United Kingdom would have shown still greater percentage decline.

The other articles of importance in our export trade with that country are hides and skins, jute manufactures, oilseeds, raw wool, lac, coffee and teak wood.

#### IV

It will be noted from the above study of the growth of Indo-British trade that most of the articles of import and export suffer from a double-sided competition.

The chief commodities of import, as already observed, are cotton goods and metal manufactures, both of which were liable to competition from home and abroad. In the case of the former the increasing home-production and the keen competition from Japan came greatly in the way of the United Kingdom. Indeed, in recent years, the imports of cotton goods from England have shown considerable decline in volume. As regards metal and metal manufactures, while in the earlier days England had no competitor on the field, towards the close of the last century Belgium and Germany came to be keen rivals of Great Britain. Indeed, by the beginning of this century, in certain kinds of metal manufactures, especially in iron and steel, the imports from Belgium and Germany to a great extent replaced those from the former. Lately the U.S.A. also joined them. Then there was the growth of Indian iron and steel industry which was raising its head under a system of protection.

In the case of exports, the trade in raw materials like jute, hides and skins, and seeds was restricted by a keener demand from Continental countries, and was thus being diverted from the United Kingdom to non-British countries ; on the other

hand, the trade in articles like coffee, cotton and tea had to meet the competition of foreign countries in supplying the British market and was thus being replaced by exports from the latter. There is a third class of commodities like food-grains and wool, the exports of which were restricted both by the available home-supply and foreign competition. It will be seen that except tea (the exports of which are also to some extent liable to foreign competition), the exports of all other articles had gradually been diverted from the United Kingdom to other countries. Great Britain would not import Indian raw cotton or jute manufactures, while India found other markets not only for these commodities but also for her raw jute, oilseeds, hides and skins and other raw materials.

## V

Another very important point to be noted in connection with the growth of Indo-British trade is that it has more or less kept pace with the progress of the foreign trade of Great Britain. This means that while the United Kingdom declined in her relative importance in India's foreign trade, India fully retained hers in Great Britain. Indeed till the outbreak of the last war, India was actually

gaining in her relative importance, the growth of Indo-British trade being ahead of that of Britain's total trade. Since then, India slightly declined in her position, the subsequent developments in the United Kingdom's foreign trade being a little quicker than those with India. On the whole, the percentage share of India in Britain's trade remained more or less the same, while her percentage share in India's trade was continuously on the decline. It is, therefore, important to note in connection with the prospects of British trade in India that the United Kingdom showed as much progress in her trade with India as with other countries. The contrast is indeed striking. The following are the corroborative index numbers :

		Total trade of U.K.	Indo-British trade.
Average	1875-79	100	100
"	1885-89	104	144
"	1895-99	121	141
"	1905-09	178	210
"	1910-13	208	265
"	1914-18	301	270
Year	1920	585	428
"	1921	322	327
"	1925	388	326

Regarding the percentage share of India in Britain's total trade, it should be observed that India occupies no such eminent position as the United Kingdom does in India. Indo-British trade represents only a fraction of Britain's total trade. It is true that as a consumer of British goods, India occupies the foremost place; but while these represent about 50 per cent of our total imports, they scarcely amount to 12 per cent of Britain's total exports. The same is the case with Britain as a consumer of Indian goods. Thus, while the share of the United Kingdom in our export trade amounted to 25.5 per cent. in 1924-25, India's share in Britain's import trade amounted to only 5.7 per cent in 1924.

The following figures bring out more clearly the position India occupies in the foreign trade of Great Britain :

YEAR 1924 : VALUE IN MILLIONS OF £

<i>Exports from U. K.</i>		<i>Import into U. K.</i>	
<i>To</i>		<i>From</i>	
India	90.6	U. S. A.	222.6
Australia	60.7	Argentina	75.2
U. S. A.	53.8	India	65.1
Germany	42.6	Canada	62.7

Considered as a whole, during the year 1924, India's share in the total trade of the United Kingdom was only 8 per cent, while Britain's share in that of India was as much as 36 per cent.

## VI

It has been observed that the decline in the percentage share of the United Kingdom in our foreign trade was more in the exports sent thereto than in the imports received therefrom.

An important change, however, took place since the close of the War. While the exports from India retained the pre-War level, the imports from the United Kingdom fell far short of it. During the period 1920-21 to 1925-26, the share of the Britain in our import trade declined from 58.8 per cent to 50.9 per cent, whereas the same in our import trade rose from 19.4 per cent to 21.0 per cent. This is also observable in the trade of the United Kingdom.

*Percentage Share of India in U.K.'S Export  
and Import Trade.*

	Export	Import
1910	10.69	5.53
1913	13.38	5.48
1922	12.80	4.25
1923	11.24	5.76
1925	11.12	..

Previous to 1922, India was gaining in relative importance in Britain's export trade, and losing in her import trade. The subsequent developments were in the opposite direction. The causes of this change in the trend of Indo-British trade will reveal a few important truths regarding the strength of Britain's hold on the Indian market.

During the war period, the import of British goods into India was naturally restricted, and countries like Japan and U. S. A. took full advantage of the situation in pushing the sale of their goods. The result was that when the United Kingdom regained her normal conditions, she found that the market had to a great extent been captured by those two countries whom it was now very difficult to drive away. Japan had come to be a formidable competitor not only in Indian market

but elsewhere, as well in the supply of cotton goods which are by far the most important article of our import trade with Britain. Moreover, the raising of the import duty and the abolition of the excise gave an advantage to Indian manufactures which they had never enjoyed before. Thus, in the post-War period, the imports of British cotton goods came to be seriously affected by competition from within the country as well as from Japan. On the other hand, the fact that Germany and Belgium could very soon recover the Indian market in spite of the complete collapse of their trade with India during the War period while the United Kingdom was unable to do so, points to the inability of Britain to compete with those countries in certain classes of commodities. The development of new industries in India also came in the way of the growth of British imports; *e.g.*, the iron and steel industry. It will thus be seen that British imports in the post-War period became subjected to very keen competition from home and abroad.

With exports from India, such was not the case. The stimulus that they had received during the War led to their subsequent growth. Moreover, the policy of Imperial Preference and the preferential duties levied on certain Indian goods in the United

Kingdom caused some slight developments in our exports to that country.

Hence it was that in the post-War period the exports sent from India to the United Kingdom showed greater developments than the imports received therefrom, while the reverse had been the case so long.

## VII

From the above study, important conclusions may be drawn regarding the future prospects of Indo-British trade. True, we have not taken into account the latest developments inasmuch as we have left the last four years out of our study; nor have we considered the possible reactions of the recent Swadeshi movement on our trade, especially with Britain. Nevertheless, the historical perspective of half a century will, in our opinion, be a surer guide in the matter than the passing events of a few abnormal years.

In view of the fact that the United Kingdom has now come under the sway of far greater competition in the import trade of India both from home as well as from foreign countries some of which are decidedly better situated in supplying many of the manufactured goods required in India, we

can expect very little progress, if not a positive decline, in our import trade with Britain.

In the case of exports sent from India, we may expect some slight developments in future, especially in view of the fact that the import of Empire products is being encouraged in the United Kingdom and that systematic efforts are being made to consume a greater amount of colonial goods. But here, also, the prospects are not very bright. Canada and Australia, with their vast agricultural resources, are showing great progress in their exports to Britain. It is not unlikely that in future some of the articles from India will be replaced by those from these colonies. In the case of wheat, they have already almost completely ousted India from the British market.

Moreover, it should not be lost sight of that the total amount of Indo-British trade has reached such huge dimensions for a poor country like India that the possibilities of further expansion are limited. While the import of British goods is restricted by competition from India and foreign countries, the exports from India are likely to be restricted by the competition from the colonies in supplying the British market and by the greater demand for Indian goods from non-British countries.

## WHAT ROMAIN ROLLAND THINKS\*

Wednesday, the 3rd April, 1935. It was a bright sunny morning, and Geneva was looking at its best. In the distance, silhouetted against the clear blue sky, stood the snow-capped heights of Saleve. In front of us there lay the picturesque lake of Geneva with the stately buildings mirrored in its glassy bosom. I was out on a pilgrimage. Ever since I had landed in Europe, two years ago, I had been longing to meet that great man and thinker—that great friend of India—and of India's culture—Mon. Romain Rolland. Circumstances had prevented our meeting in 1933 and again in 1934, but the third attempt was going to succeed. I was in high spirits, but occasionally a thrill of anxiety and doubt passed within me. Would I be inspired by this man or would I return disappointed? Would this great dreamer and idealist appreciate the hard facts of life—the practical difficulties that beset the path of the fighter in every age and clime?

\* This article has been revised by Mon. Romain Rolland.

Above all, would he read what fate had written on the walls of India's history?

What heartened me, however, were the inspiring words in his letter of the 22nd February... "But we men of thought must each of us fight against the temptation that befalls us in moments of fatigue and unsettledness, of repairing to a world beyond the battle called either God or Art or Freedom of the Spirit or those distant regions of the mystic soul. For fight we must, as our duty lies on this side of the ocean—on the battle-ground of men."

For full two hours we drove along the circuitous route which skirts the lake of Geneva. It was charming weather and while we raced along the Swiss Riviera we enjoyed one of the finest sceneries in Switzerland. As we came to Villeneuve, the car slowed down, and ultimately came to a standstill in front of Villa Olga, the residence of the French savant. That was indeed a beauty spot. Sheltered by an encircling row of hills, the house commanded a magnificent view of the lake. All around us there was peace, beauty and grandeur. It was indeed a fit place for a hermitage.

As I rang the bell, the door was opened by a

lady of short stature but with an exceedingly sympathetic and lively face. This was Madame Romain Rolland. Hardly had she greeted me than another door opened in front of us and there emerged a tall figure with a pale countenance and with wonderful penetrating eyes. Yes, this was the face I had seen in many a picture before, a face that seemed to be burdened with the sorrows of humanity. There was something exquisitely sad in that pallid face—but it was not an expression of defeatism. For no sooner did he begin to speak than colour rushed to his white cheeks—the eyes glowed with a light that was uncommon—and the words that he poured forth were pregnant with life and hope.

The usual greetings and the preliminary inquiries about India and Indian friends were soon over and we dropped into a serious conversation. Mon. Rolland could not—or did not—speak English and I could not speak French. So we had as interpreters Mademoiselle Rolland and Madame Rolland. My purpose was to discuss with him the latest developments in the Indian situation and to ascertain his present views on the important problems before the world. I had therefore to do much of the talking at first in order to explain the Indian situation as I analysed and comprehended it.

The two cardinal principles on which the movement of the last 14 years had been based were—firstly, Satyagraha or non-violent resistance and secondly, a united front of all sections of the Indian people, *e.g.*, capital and labour and landlord and peasant. India's great hope was that the Satyagraha movement would fructify in a peaceful settlement in the following manner. Within India, the movement would gradually paralyse the civil administration of the country. Outside India, the lofty ethics of Satyagraha would stir the conscience of the British people. Thus would the conflict lead to a settlement whereby India would win her freedom without striking a blow and without shedding any blood. But that hope was frustrated. Within India, the Satyagraha movement no doubt created a non-violent revolution, but the higher services, both civil and military, remained unaffected and the "King's Government" therefore went on much as usual. Outside India, a handful of high-minded Britishers were no doubt inspired by the ethics of Gandhi, but the British people as a whole remained quite indifferent; self-interest drowned the ethical appeal.

The failure to win freedom led to a very earnest heart-searching among the rank and file of

the Indian National Congress. One section of Congress men went back to the old policy of constitutional action within the Legislatures. Mahatma Gandhi and his orthodox followers, after the suspension of the civil disobedience movement (or *Styagraha*), turned to a programme of social and economic uplift of the villages. But the more radical section, in their disappointment, inclined to a new ideology and plan of action and the majority of them combined to form the Congress Socialist Party.

"What would be Mon. Rolland's attitude," I asked at the end of my lengthy preface, "if the united front is broken up and a new movement is started not quite in keeping with the requirements of Gandhian *Satyagraha*?"

He would be very sorry and disappointed, said Mon. Rolland, if Gandhi's *Satyagraha* failed to win freedom for India. At the end of the Great War, when the whole world was sick of bloody strife and hatred, a new light had dawned on the horizon when Gandhi emerged with his new weapon of political strife. Great were the hopes that Gandhi had roused throughout the whole world.

"We find from experience," said I, "that Gandhi's method is too lofty for this materialistic

world and, as a political leader, he is too straightforward in his dealings with his opponents. We find, further, that though the British are not wanted in India, with the help of superior physical force, they have nevertheless been able to maintain their existence in India in spite of the inconvenience and annoyance caused by the Satyagraha movement. If Satyagraha ultimately fails, would Mon. Rolland like to see the national endeavour continued by other methods or would he cease taking interest in the Indian movement?"

"The struggle must go on in any case"—was the emphatic reply.

"But I know several European friends of India who have told me distinctly that their interest in the Indian freedom movement is due entirely to Gandhi's method of non-violent resistance."

Mon. Rolland did not agree with them at all. He would be sorry, if Satyagraha failed. But if it really did, then the hard facts of life would have to be faced and he would like to see the movement conducted on other lines.

That was the answer nearest to my heart. He then was an idealist, who did not build castles in the air but who had his feet planted on terra firma.

"There are people in Europe," I said, who

say that just as in Russia there were two successive revolutions—a bourgeois democratic revolution and a socialist revolution—so also in India there will be two successive revolutions—a national-democratic revolution and a social revolution. In my opinion, however, the fight for political freedom will have to be conducted simultaneously with the fight for socio-economic emancipation. The party that will bring political freedom to India will be the party that will also put into effect the entire programme of socio-economic reconstruction. What is Mon. Rolland's opinion on the point?"

He found it difficult to express a definite opinion because he was not aware of all the facts of the Indian situation.

"What would be Mon. Rolland's attitude," I continued, "if the united front policy of the Indian National Congress fails to win freedom for India and a radical party emerges which identifies itself with the interests of the peasants and the workers?"

Mon. Rolland was clearly of opinion that the time had come for the Congress to take a definite stand on the economic issues. "I have already written to Gandhi," said he, "that he should make up his mind on this question."

Explaining his attitude in the event of a schism

within the Indian National Congress, he continued, "I am not interested in choosing between two political parties or between two generations. What is of interest and of value to me is a higher question. To me, political parties do not count; what really counts is the great cause that transcends them—the cause of the workers of the world. To be more explicit, if as a result of unfortunate circumstances, Gandhi (or any party, for the matter of that) should be in conflict with the cause of the workers and with their necessary evolution towards a socialistic organization—if Gandhi (or any party) should turn away and stand aloof from the workers' cause, then for ever will I side with the oppressed workers—for ever will I participate in their efforts\* \* \*, because on their side is justice and the law of the real and necessary development of human society."

I was delighted and amazed. Even in my most optimistic moods, I had never expected this great thinker to come out so openly and boldly in support of the workers' cause.

The strain resulting from our animated conversations was great and I felt anxious for the delicate health of my host. However, a relief came when tea was announced and we all moved into the adjoining room.

Over cups of tea our conversation went on uninterrupted. Many were the problems that we rushed through in our two and a half hours' discussion. Mon. Rolland was greatly interested in the Congress Socialist Party and its composition. His concern for the continued incarceration of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and other politicals was profound. His interest in all the actions, speeches and writings of the Mahatma was astonishing. For instance, he pulled out from his old files a statement of the Mahatma in which he had expressed his sympathy for socialism.

We talked at length of Mahatma Gandhi and his tactics. I ventured the remark that the Mahatma would not take a definite stand on the economic issues. Whether on political, or social, or economic questions, he was temperamentally a believer in "the golden mean." I then referred to what the younger generation regarded as some of the defects in his leadership and tactics, namely, his incorrigible habit of putting all his cards on the table, his opposition to the policy of social boycott of political opponents, his hope of a change of heart on the part of the British Government, etc. It did not afford us any satisfaction, I said, to oppose him or even criticize him—when he had done more

for his country than anyone else in recent history and had raised India considerably in the estimation of the whole world. But we loved our country more than any personality.

I asked Mon. Rolland if he would be good enough to put in a nutshell the main principles for which he had stood and fought all his life. "Those fundamental principles," he said "are (1) Internationalism (including equal rights for all races without distinction), (2) Justice for the exploited workers—implying thereby that we should fight for a society in which there will be no exploiters and no exploited—but all will be workers for the entire community, (3) Freedom for all suppressed nationalities and (4) Equal rights for women as for men." And he proceeded to amplify some of these points.

As our conversation was drawing to a close, I remarked that the views he had expressed that afternoon, would cause surprise in many quarters since they appeared to be a recent development in his thought-life. This remark worked like an electric button and set in motion a whole train of thought. Mon. Rolland spoke of the acute mental agony he had passed through since the end of the War in trying to revise his social ideas and his entire ideology. "This combat within myself," he said,

"extended over a very wide field and the problem of non-violence was only a part of it. I have not decided against non-violence, but I have decided that non-violence cannot be the central pivot of our entire social activity. It can be one of its means—one of its proposed forms, still subject to experiment."

Continuing, he said, "The primary objective of all our endeavours should be the establishment of another social order, more just and more human.

\* \* \* \* \* If we do not do so, it will mean the end of society." Then referring to the methods of activity, he said, "\* \* \* \* \* My own task has been for several years to try and unite the forces\* \* \* against the old order that is enslaving and exploiting humanity. This has been my role in the World's Congress of all political parties against War and Fascism, which was held in Amsterdam in 1932 and in the permanent Committees appointed by that Congress. I still believe that there is in non-violence a strong, though latent, revolutionary power which can and ought to be used, \* \* \*

I interrupted him at this stage to ask him how the world at large could know of his present ideas. To this he replied, "My social creed of these

fifteen years have been expounded in two volumes of articles which have been just published. In the first one "Quinze ans de Combat" (Fifteen Years of Combat), Editions Rieder, Boulevard St. Germain 108, Paris VI,—I have spoken of my inner fight and the evolution of my social ideas. In the second book "Par la Revolution La Paix (By Way of Revolution to Peace) Editions Sociales Internationales, 24, Rue Racini, Paris VI,—I have dealt with questions concerning war, peace, non-violence, \* \* \* and the co-ordination of their efforts in fighting the old social order." Continuing he said that some of his friends had refused to recognize all that he had written, preferring to accept only those portions with which they agreed. These two volumes\* would, however, be a faithful record of the evolution of his thought.

Our conversation did not end without a discussion of the much-apprehended and much-talked-of war in Europe. "For suppressed peoples and nationalities," I remarked, "war is not an unmixed evil". "But for Europe war will be the

\* I have just received a present of these two books from the author. What a pity I cannot read them in the original! I feel like learning French if only for the sake of reading these books.

greatest disaster," said he ; "It may even mean the end of civilization. And for Russia, peace is absolutely necessary if she is to complete her programme of social reconstruction."

Before I took leave of my host, I expressed my deep gratitude for his kindness, and my great satisfaction at what he had conveyed to me. I valued so greatly his sympathy for India, and her cause, that it had filled me with anxiety and fear whenever I had tried to imagine what his reaction would be towards the latest developments in the Indian situation.

The sun was still shining on the blue waters of the lake of Geneva as I emerged out of Villa Olga. Around me there stood the snow-covered mountains. The air was pregnant with joy and it infected me. A heavy load had been lifted off my mind. I felt convinced that this great thinker and artist would stand for India and her freedom whatever might be her immediate future or her future line of action. And with that conviction I returned to Geneva a happy man.

*Karlsbad, July 2, 1935*

EDITOR'S NOTE:—In order to comply with the requirements of the press laws in force in India,

so far as it is possible for us to understand them, we have omitted certain portions of this article, indicated by asterisks.

## A FRIEND OF INDIA IN POLAND

During my journey in Poland in 1933 I was fortunate enough to meet several interesting personalities, some of whom were greatly interested in India. The general attitude was one of sympathy for India's struggle for national emancipation. The Poles having struggled long for their freedom, and having won it quite recently—are in a position to sympathize with another nation struggling for its national freedom. I remember that I was once taken in a car by some Polish friends in Warsaw to see peasant-life in the interior. We were taken to a village agricultural school—one of the new schools established by the Government, for giving the children of the peasantry an education in modern scientific agriculture. We were shown round by the caretaker, an old woman, and at the end of our visit, she asked very kindly about the health of Mahatma Gandhi and what he was doing at the time. It was touching.

One of the efforts of the Polish people at present is to industrialize their country as rapidly

as possible. For this purpose, they have built a port of their own—Gdynia, which has made them independent of the former German port of Danzig, which has now been internationalized. They are also attempting to develop their foreign trade and in this connection, they have been opening Consulates in different countries. The Polish Consulate in India was opened in Bombay in 1933. The textile industry in Poland is highly developed, one of the important textile centres being Lodz. Recently the Iron and Steel Industry has been making rapid progress.

There is an Oriental Society in Warsaw the capital of Poland, which is specially interested in Oriental culture. I was invited to a social gathering under the auspices of the Oriental Society and I spoke about our desire for a Polish-Indian Society which would endeavour to foster cultural and commercial relations between our two countries.

The students, both men and women, were wide-awake. The women were particularly enthusiastic in the matter of developing contact with foreign countries including India. They wanted information about students and youth organisations in India. Their organisation was called the LIGA. Within the Liga, they had a separate circle

for each country, with which they wanted to develop contact.

In this brief article I shall refer particularly to one interesting personality whom I met in Warsaw—Professor Stanislaw F. Michalski who has devoted his whole life to the study of Sanskrit and Indian literature and is a lover of India.

Prof. Michalski-Iwiński was born in 1881 in Poland. He studied Sanskrit language and Indian literature under Professor Leopold V. Schroder in Vienna from 1905-1911 and in Göttingen, in Germany under Prof. Oldenburg in 1914. For several years he delivered lectures on the Sanskrit Language and Literature at the Polish Free University of Warsaw-Wolna Wszechnica. In 1920 he took part as a volunteer in the war against the Bolsheviks. Since then, Prof. Michalski has been giving his whole time to literary and scientific work. In 1923, together with some Polish Orientalists he founded the Oriental Section of the Warsaw Scientific Society.

Prof. Michalski is the author of a number of books in Polish on India and Indian culture. The following are some of them:—

(1) Bhagavad-Gita, 1912; second edition—1920  
third edition—1926.

(2) Upanishads (selected), 1913; second edition—1922.

(3) Rama's Longing (one chapter from the Ramayan), 1920.

(4) Dhammapadam (translated), 1924.

(5) Forty Songs of the Rig-Veda, 1914.

(6) Atmabodha, 1923.

(7) Bhagwad Gita (Text in Sanskrit with Introduction and remarks), 1921.

In the Introduction of a Polish Edition of ODYSSEA (Warsaw), 1935—Prof. Michalski has referred to the relations between the Ramayana and the Odyssey and has pointed out the necessity of studying the Ramayana in connection with research work about Homer.

During the last few years Prof. Michalski has been engaged in bringing out a big Polish Encyclopaedia in which he has written several articles about India, Indian Language and Literature, Indian Geography, Indian History, etc. Many pictures and a multi-coloured map have been appended to the big article on India.

In 1924, the Professor gave a discourse in Warsaw about the Epic Poetry of India. In 1935, he gave a discourse about a general survey of India before the Warsaw Branch of the Rotary Club.

The Professor has been collecting a library about India during the last few years. The library contains at present over 2,000 books on the Sanskrit Language and Indian Literature, ancient and modern.

As a host, Prof. Michalski was exceedingly hospitable. He treated me to a sumptuous dinner, and as a parting *dakshina* gave me a big bundle of his own publications.

It is interesting to know that another Polish Professor, Prof. Stasiak of Lwow, is now on a visit to India. Prof. Stasiak is a well-known Orientalist, and has spoken at several important centres in Europe on Ancient Indian Literature and Philosophy.

The ground has already been prepared for a Polish-Indian Society in Poland—with a corresponding branch in India. All that is wanted now is that somebody should take the lead.

## AN INDIAN COLONEL IN ROUMANIA

During my recent visit to Roumania I came across in Bucharest a very interesting personality. He is Dr. Narsingh-Mulgund, a Lt.-Col. in the medical department of the Roumanian army. I became so interested in him that I obtained from him the particulars of his early life which I am now writing for the information of my countrymen.

A Maharashtrian by birth, his home was in Taluka Bhuvanagir, sixty miles from Hyderabad city in Deccan. He had his early education in Bombay and after matriculating, he went over to Calcutta.

In Calcutta he joined the Scottish Churches College and studied for the F. A. Examination. Simultaneously, he studied at the National Medical College of Dr. S. K. Mullick. Among the teachers at the latter College were Dr. S. K. Mullick, Dr. Y. M. Bose, Dr. B. C. Ghosh and Dr. M. D. Das. He duly passed the F.A. Examination, and the M. C. P. S. Examination from the National Medical

College. In 1912, he went over to London and took the M.R.C.S. Diploma.

About this time the Turko-Balkan War broke out and Dr. Mulgund volunteered for service in the Red Crescent Mission in Turkey. There were two medical missions, one led by Dr. Ansari, and the other by Dr. Abdul Hossain, and Dr. Mulgund joined the latter. He worked for six months as a surgeon with the Turkish army at Shatalja. There he got the Order of Commander of Majidia from the Turkish Government. In the Turko-Balkan War Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria fought against Turkey. This war soon came to an end, but a fresh war broke out in which Serbia and Greece attacked Bulgaria. Roumania also joined in the fray. Since Bulgaria had grabbed a lot of territory from Turkey during the Turko-Balkan War, Turkey took this opportunity of regaining some of her lost territories. When Roumania declared war against Bulgaria, the mission went over to Roumania.

In Roumania Dr. Mulgund worked in Zimnica, where there was a field-hospital. Cholera then broke out in the Roumanian army and the medical mission proved to be of great assistance. As a reward for his services, Dr. Mulgund got the

Order of Military Virtue from the Roumanian Government. This was in August, 1913. At the end of the Second Balkan War, the other members of the medical mission returned to India, but Dr. Mulgund stayed on. He felt a strong impulse to carve out for himself a career in Roumania.

But who would help him was the problem. Fortunately, about this time Dr. Lupu, a well-known politician, and Professor Stanculeanu took a fancy for him. His future career depended on his becoming a naturalized subject. With the help of his two friends and through the strength of his war services, he was able to become a naturalized subject long before the usual term. Soon after this he obtained a job as an assistant in the Eye-clinic, attached to the University Hospital. He then passed the State Examination in Roumania. After passing his examination he was able to obtain an appointment as a Sub-lieutenant in the medical department of the Roumanian army.

This was in April, 1915. On August 15, 1916 Roumania declared war against Germany. In 1917, Dr. Mulgund became a Lieutenant and in 1918 a Captain. In 1926, he became a Major and in May, 1934 a few days before I came to Bucharest,

he became a Lt.-Colonel.

Dr. Mulgund, or rather Lt.-Col. Mulgund, is one of the best Eye-specialists in Roumania. From 1919 to 1922 he was Chief of the Eye-Hospital in Oradia and from 1922 to 1928 he was an Eye-specialist, attached to the military hospital in Bucharest. During my stay in Bucharest he was asked by the War Minister to open a new Eye Hospital for the benefit of the army.

Lt.-Col. Mulgund married a Roumanian lady, and they have two children, both of them girls. They are a happy family. He is quite well known in Bucharest and even before I met him I came to hear of him from several Roumanian friends. During my stay at Bucharest I had the pleasure of spending much of my time with him. From the way he used to be accosted by the Roumanian gentry and by military officers whenever we went out together, one could see, that he was not only well-known there, but much esteemed also.

Though he has been away from India, and though he is now a Roumanian subject, he has not forgotten his own language. Besides Marathi, he can speak Hindi fairly well and still retains a fair knowledge of Sanskrit. He is very fond of quoting Sanskrit maxims and verses

from the Gita. It was a very great pleasure and honour to meet Lt.-Col. Mulgund in Bucharest. And I have no doubt that those of my countrymen who read this, will be equally pleased and interested. Lt.-Col. Mulgund lives at Strada Canzasi 14, Bucharest.

## PASSING THROUGH CAIRO

There are few cities so fascinating as Cairo, the capital of Modern Egypt. Nursed by the Nile and guarded by the towering Pyramids, this city with its pleasing climate, luxuriant vegetation, lovely streets and picturesque buildings, has an unceasing attraction for the foreigner. But how few of those who repeatedly pass in and out of the Suez Canal have been to Cairo !

Thanks to the arrangements made by the Lloyed Triestino Company, we could leave *M. N. Victoria* at Suez, drive by car to Cairo, spend a useful day there and catch the boat again at Port Said. By 9 p.m. on the 16th January, 1935, we were at Suez. The ship anchored at a great distance from the shore and we had to cross over in a ferry. It was a moonlit night. The vast expanse of water was brightened by the rays of the silvery moon. All around us were gleaming the lights of the town of Suez and of Port Tewfik with their starry reflection dancing in the bosom of the sea. Passing the customs barrier, we got

into the car which was to carry us to Cairo. Soon the town was past and we were in the heart of the desert, rushing northwards. A companion of ours was expecting some adventure at the hands of desert Bedoins, but he was disappointed. There was peace all along the way—endless sand on both sides—the road running straight ahead and the pale moon shedding its lustre from the canopy of heaven. It was past midnight when we reached Cairo. In the stillness of the night, the brilliantly lighted streets of Cairo with their stately buildings looked enchanting.

The next morning we made our trip to the Pyramids. The air was cold and a biting wind was blowing as we crossed the Nile and rushed to where the world-famous Pyramids were silhouetted against the morning sky. Soon we arrived at their foot and began to gaze upwards. So these were the monuments of stone that had fired the imagination of even a soldier like Napoleon! The French Emperor had drawn up his troops near them and had stirred up their tired limbs by reminding them that 5,000 years were looking down upon them. The appeal had worked like magic and the Mamelukes had been scattered like dust before the wind. Round the Pyramids we walked and in and

out of the several excavations, wondering all the time what the Pyramids had to teach us. Yes, we also could feel an inspiration. Standing before those towering giants against the background of the endless and dreary desert, one could realize the majesty of man and the immortality of the soul. The authors of those edifices had defied time. They had enshrined themselves in stone and whoever had any inwardness of perception, could hold communion with them.

Near the Pyramids was the Sphinx with its eternal riddle. One massive work of stone, the searching eyes gazing at the rising sun—what idea did the Sphinx embody? One of the guides ventured an explanation. The ancient Egyptians worshipped the Sun-God and the Sphinx was either a symbol of the Sun or a representative of Sun-worship. But who knew? The soul that had built the Sphinx did not speak and the riddle remained unsolved. A little bird was sitting motionless on the head of the Sphinx. "That is the soul of the Sphinx," said a guide, to tickle our phantasy, "that comes every morning to greet him." Looking more closely at the face of the Sphinx, we found that the nose had been blown off. That was another problem, we thought. But

the guides were not to be daunted. "It was a cannon-ball of the Emperor Napoleon that did the havoc," said one of them. Connecting Napoleon with the Pyramids, we were prepared to be convinced. But another guide protested. "It was the Arab iconoclasts who had done it," he said, "to spite the ancient Egyptians."

We left the Sphinx more puzzled than ever and turned to the Pyramids. "Do you want to climb to the top of the Pyramids?" asked one guide. "No, thank you, time is against us" was the reply. "There is a man who can run up to the top and descend in eight minutes, Sir," he continued. Thinking that it was a further trick for emptying our pockets, we declined, saying that that did not interest us. Instead, we sought to explore the interior of the biggest of the Pyramids. That was no difficult task. The narrow passage leading up to the big hall in the heart of the Pyramid was lighted with electricity. Only our backs were aching at the time we reached the hall—the effect of continuous bending while we were climbing the steps. The total height of the Pyramid was more than 450 feet and the hall was situated almost half-way. The mummies of the ancient kings used to be stored here, but the hall was now empty, the

mummies having been removed to the museums. There was another and smaller hall at a lower level, where the mummies of the queens used to be stored.

The Pyramids of Geza, where there is the Sphinx, are about nine miles from Cairo. There are nine Pyramids in all, three big and six small ones. The big ones are in perfect condition—only the alabaster coating having come off at many places. There is another group of Pyramids at a greater distance from Cairo, about twenty miles, near the ancient city of Memphis, and some statues of the ancient Egyptian kings are to be found there.

No less interesting than the Pyramids is the Museum of Antiquities in Cairo which is a store house of all the finds in different parts of Egypt. Within this Museum the most interesting section is that which contains the finds of the tomb of Tutankhamen at Luxor in Upper Egypt. It is not possible to do justice to them in the course of one or two visits. At every step, one is left wondering at the high level of art and civilization which the ancient Egyptians attained at a period which must be at least as old as 2000 B.C. The works of art look as fresh as if they had been constructed only yesterday and apart from the excellence of their

workmanship, what simply appals the imagination of man is how they have been so effectively preserved as to defy the ravages of time.

As compared with Egypt, India also can boast of a very ancient culture and civilization, but one must admit that we have not been able to preserve what we constructed, owing to our comparative inefficiency in the art of preservation. Moreover, I do not think that we developed the material side of life—the arts and crafts—as much as the ancient Egyptians did. Our emphasis was not on civilization, but on culture; not on the material side of life but on the intellectual and spiritual. Therein, we had our advantages as well as disadvantages. Owing to our superior thought-power, we could hold our own against invaders from outside even when we were vanquished physically for the time being—and in course of time we could also absorb the outsider, while the ancient Egyptian went down before the Arab invaders and disappeared altogether.

On the other hand, emphasis on the intellectual and spiritual side, caused us to neglect the development of science and left us comparatively weak on the material and physical side of life. The glorious periods of our history were, when we were able to

strike the golden mean between the demands of spirit and of matter, of the soul and of the body—and thereby progress simultaneously on both fronts. Owing to the inter-relation between the soul and the body, the neglect of the body not only weakens a nation physically, but in the long run, weakens it spiritually as well. India at the present moment appears to be suffering not merely from physical weakness but from spiritual exhaustion as well—the inevitable result of our neglecting one aspect of life. And if we are to come to our own once again, we have to advance simultaneously on both fronts.

To return to our narrative. The morning excursions over, we devoted the afternoon to sight-seeing within the city. Cairo is full of mosques and tombs and much of ancient history lies embedded therein. Each mosque has its own beauty and its own story to tell. Sometimes, one is brought face to face with scenes of biblical interest as well, but how far they are real, one cannot tell. For instance, inside the big Citadel (the old fort of Cairo), the guide showed me a very deep well, which he said was the well of Joseph. One of the most interesting spots in Cairo is the Citadel from where one can have a magnificent

view of the whole city. The Palace of Mohammed Ali from where this view is obtained is unfortunately in a neglected condition now. The guide showed us the room where Mohammed Ali is supposed to have invited the Mamelukes to dinner and afterwards taken them unawares and massacred them, only one of the Mamelukes escaping with his life. Outside this Palace, is the mosque of Mohammed Ali which fortunately is now being renovated at considerable cost. The mosque of Sultan Hassan, the Blue Mosque, the tomb of the Mamelukes, the Al Azhar University—are some of the other places of interest which draw the foreigner.

Having seen something of old Egypt, our thoughts naturally turned to Modern Egypt. Modern Cairo was a fine city and one could not but admire it. But the modern Palace of the king was by no means an imposing structure. Even the barracks of the British troops looked more attractive. Egypt, we were told, had a King but a rude reminder came when we eyed the Union Jack proudly floating in the wind on the top of the British barracks in the heart of the town and also in the Citadel. Independence indeed!

But what about the people of Modern Egypt?

I had heard of the Nationalist Party of Egypt—called the Wafd Party which was once so brilliantly led by Syed Zaghoul Pasha of revered memory, who has left an able successor in Moustapha El-Nahas Pasha. A visit to Cairo would of course be meaningless without an interview with the great nationalist leader. The time at my disposal was short, but I was lucky enough to have the desired interview. Moustapha El-Nahas Pasha was accompanied by two of his ablest colleagues, Mr. M. F. Nokrashy and Mr. Makram Ebeid, when I met him. We had a very interesting talk. I was anxious to know something about Egypt at first hand—while they were anxious to know about India. I was glad to learn that under the Premiership of Nessim Pasha, the rule of ordinance had ended in Egypt. The Nationalists could once again breathe freely. On the 8th and 9th January, 1935, they had a Congress of the Wafd Party in Cairo attended by over 30,000 people which had proved to be an unparalleled success. Elections to the Parliament were expected to be held shortly and Wafd Party was confident of sweeping the polls. Altogether, the situation looked very hopeful for the Nationalists and the leaders were in high spirits.

Turning to India, Moustapha El-Nahas Pasha

first inquired about the health of Mahatma Gandhi. He said that when the Mahatma was returning to India in 1931, he had sent his Secretary to Port Said to invite him to Cairo and he had arranged a meeting in his own house of the prominent members of his Party. But unfortunately the Mahatma could not come. Our talk next turned to the Hindu-Muslim question, and Moustapha condemned the action of those communalists who were acting against the best interests of Indian Nationalism. He enquired one by one, as to who among the Moslem leaders were working with the Nationalist Party and who were on the side of the Government. He said that in Egypt, the Egyptian Moslems had come to a perfect understanding with the Egyptian Christians (called Copts) and both the communities were working hand-in-hand for the uplift of Egypt. He hoped that before long the same thing would happen in India. In conclusion, I assured the Moustapha that we Indians were following the fortunes of the Egyptian people with the greatest interest and our whole-hearted sympathy was with them in their struggle for freedom. In return, he conveyed the warmest sympathy of the Egyptian people for the Indians in their National fight for freedom.

After a busy day spent in Cairo, we left by train for Port Said to catch our boat there. In the train we had several Egyptian fellow-passengers and as some of them spoke English (French is, on the whole, more popular in Egypt than English), we soon fell into a conversation. We wanted to find out how the man in the street looked upon the nationalist Wafd Party. One of the passengers—a Copt who was a Government servant, was at first chary of committing himself. But when he found that we were dependable, he became more frank. He spoke very highly of the Egyptian leaders and said, among other things, that all Egyptians, whether Moslems or Christians, wore the Tarboosh or Fez Cap, because it was the National head dress of the Egyptian people, (till then I had always regarded the Fez cap as a symbol of Islam).

By 11 P.M. we were on board our ship. Within an hour she set sail. At the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea, we passed the statue of the French Engineer, Lesseps who had constructed the Suez Canal and we were soon on the high seas. The lights of Port Said grew dimmer and dimmer as the waves began to grow in volume. When morning dawned, the ship was rolling and most of us were sick.

## A GLIMPSE OF ADEN

On the 13th January, 1935, when *M. N. Victoria* of Llyod Triestino called at Aden on her way to Europe from Bombay, some Indian residents of Aden arrived and invited me to accept their hospitality for a few hours. I did so with great pleasure. When I went ashore in their company, there was an agreeable surprise for me. I had seen Aden last in 1919 on my way to England, but what a pleasant contrast! Now there were beautiful roads (probably asphalted), street-lighting with electricity and many imposing buildings to greet the eye. On enquiry I learnt that the population of Aden was over 50,000 and the Indian population well over 2,000. The Indian settlers were businessmen and the majority of them hailed from Kathiawar. Aden is a flourishing port and trade-centre and the volume of trade is steadily on the increase. Raw materials like hides, as well as articles like coffee, are brought from the interior and shipped to Europe. Manufactured foods, including textiles, which are symbols of so-called

civilization, are imported from Europe and sent into the interior of the Arabian peninsula. The administration is British in personnel in the higher grades. In the lower grades, the employees are partly Arab and partly Indian. At present Aden is under the administration of the Government of India.

The problem that has been worrying the Indian settlers in Aden is the proposed separation from India. They are genuinely afraid that their interests will suffer greatly if they are cut off from India and thereby lose the support of public opinion in India. I tried to find out what was at the back of the mind of the authorities in launching this proposal. So far as the Indians were concerned, they were of opinion that the motive was political. The Government wanted to convert Aden into a Colonial possession, so that even if India got Swaraj at some time in the future, Aden would be safe in their hands. Aden and Singapore were the two naval gateways of India and these two gateways were to be kept under full Imperial control. There were some Indian regiments in Aden formerly, but they had been sent back and there were only British troops, numbering about 2,000, left there. There was also a strong contingent of the Royal

Air Force stationed at Aden. The territory within a radius of 25 miles from Aden was under British protectorate and beyond that was independent territory.

Besides the strategic importance of Aden as commanding the entrance to the Red Sea, the place is also interesting because of its picturesqueness. Aden is sheltered in the bosom of some rocky hills. The major portion of the town is situated at the foot of the hills but some of the nicest buildings are built high up and there are winding roads, quite modern in construction, leading up to them. Tunnels have been built through some of the hills with a view to improving communications.

Rainfall is very scanty in Aden and hence the acuteness of the problem of drinking water. This problem was solved by the Arabs long long ago in a clever way. The rain falling on the hills used to be collected in a huge stony reservoir constructed out of natural rocks lying at the foot of the hills and throughout the year, water used to be drawn from the reservoir for drinking purposes. Besides this supply of water, there were very deep wells, of the same sort that one would find in Indian villages. The day we reached Aden, there had been a heavy shower and the reservoir was pretty full.

I was glad to find that the Indians in Aden were keenly following events at home. They asked me for the latest information. At the group meeting—after giving me all the information I wanted about Aden—they requested me to speak on the Congress programme. I delivered a short address on the constructive programme adopted at the Bombay Congress and on the Khadi movement in India. The meeting over, light refreshments were served and I was then driven round the town. A pleasant farewell ceremony took place at the jetty and I then returned to my boat *M. N. Victoria*. By midnight we were once again on the high seas.

It would encourage the Indians in Aden greatly if prominent Indians take the trouble of landing at Aden and meeting their fellow-countrymen there. They remembered gratefully the visits paid to them by Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. There is also considerable room for cultural propaganda among Indians there and any Indians visiting Aden for that purpose are sure to be warmly welcomed. At present Pandit Kanahya Lal Misra of Benares is engaged in that work there, but he is to leave soon.

It is the desire of Indians in Aden that there should be a strong agitation in India against the

proposed separation. Whatever may ultimately happen, there is no doubt that public opinion in India on this question should make itself heard without delay.

## JAPAN'S ROLE IN THE FAR EAST

Every now and then we open our daily papers to read about some clash between China and Japan. Many pass over the columns as something happening too far away to interest us in India. Others go through the columns as a matter of routine. But I wonder how few of us understand the significance of the happenings reported.

The islands which form the homeland of the Japanese race are overpopulated. They have to support a population of about 70 millions, with the result that there is overcrowding and too much pressure on the land. But that is not the end of the trouble. The Japanese are exceedingly prolific, and their population has been growing by leaps and bounds. The number of people per square mile in China is 100. In Japan it is 313. Moreover, Japan's birth-rate is twice that of Great Britain. Hence Japan wants more territory for her children to settle in—more raw materials for her growing industries and more markets for her finished goods. No one will make her a present

of these three things—hence the resort to force. The only other solution for Japan is, to restrict her population, through birth-control, and live within her own resources—but that solution does not obviously appeal to her. This is, in short, the *raison d'être* of Japanese imperialist expansion.

Japanese expansion can take place only in the face of Chinese, Russian, British or American opposition. If she expands on the Asiatic mainland, she is bound to incur the wrath of China or Russia. If she expands southwards—towards the Philippine Islands or Australia—she is bound to come into conflict with the United States of America or Great Britain. As far as one can judge, Japan seems to have decided in favour of the first course, notwithstanding the appeal made by Lt.-Commander Ishimaru in his book *Japan Must Fight England* to the effect, that she should make up with China, Russia and the U. S. A., and concentrate on fighting England. On the Asiatic mainland the territory on which Japan can cast her eyes belongs either to Russia or to China. To attack Russia would be folly for Japan, because under Soviet rule, Russia is fully re-awakened. She has, moreover, a first class military machine, both in Europe as well as in the Far East.

Therefore, the only alternative left to Japan for satisfying her imperialist ambitions is to expand at the expense of China. But though she may expand at the expense of China, that expansion can take place only in the teeth of Russian opposition, for reason that will be explained below. So far as Britain is concerned, however much she may dislike the growth of Japanese power on the Asiatic continent, she will put up with the nuisance, knowing full well that the only alternative to it would be expansion to the south, bringing Japan into direct and unavoidable conflict with her; and in her present mood, the U. S. A., will certainly not go to war with Japan over her "interests" in the Far East.

Being an Asiatic country and living in close proximity to a huge continent, it is but natural that Japan should look primarily to the mainland of Asia to fulfil her imperialist needs. There she finds a huge state—formerly the Celestial Empire, and now the Republic of China—ill-managed and disunited, and with more natural resources than she can herself develop. The vastness, the potential richness, and the internal weakness of China, constitute the greatest temptation for Japan.

The conflict between the two Asiatic countries

is more than forty years old. It began towards the end of the last century. By that time, Japan had modernised her state-machinery, with the help of modern methods, and had modern weapons of warfare. She found that all the big European Powers had begun to exploit China and to enrich themselves at her expense. Why, then, should not Japan, an Asiatic Power living next-door, do the same and keep out the Western Powers from draining the Wealth of the East? This was the imperialist logic which started Japan on her race for expansion.

During the last forty years, Japan has not lost a single opportunity for wresting concessions from the Chinese Government, and during this period she has been undermining the influence of the Western exploiting powers, slowly and steadily. Her greatest rivals were Russia, Britain, the U. S. A. and Germany. During the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, she was able to checkmate the Czarist Empire. During the Great War she was able to wipe out Germany from the map of China. But she has not been able to tackle Britain and the U. S. A. And in the meantime Russia, which was once beaten, has come back into the picture as a Soviet State, newly armed and considerably

strengthened.

The disintegration of China began during the latter half of the nineteenth century. European powers like Britain, Russia, Germany, etc., and the U. S. A. put pressure on China, and obtained "treaty-ports" like Hong Kong, Shanghai, etc., which virtually amounted to annexation of Chinese territory. Just before the end of the last century, Japan appeared on the scene and also adopted, Western tactics in her dealings with China.

The island of Formosa lying to the south-east of China was acquired by Japan in the War of 1904-1905. About the same time Japan took over the Kwantung Railway, and the southern part of the Chinese Eastern Railway, running through Manchuria, thereby making South Manchuria a Japanese sphere of influence. Korea, formerly Chinese territory, was annexed by Japan openly in 1910, and it is interesting to note that Japan had professed to secure its independence, when she went to war with China in 1894. During the Great War, Japan declared war on Germany, and immediately proceeded to seize Tsingtao and other German possessions in the Shantung peninsula. In 1915, when she found all the Western Powers up to their neck in the war, Japan presented 21 demands

to China, and extorted several concessions from her. After the war, Japan received as her share of the spoils, the mandate for the ex-German Pacific Islands, the strategic importance of which lies in their position athwart the direct sea-route from the United States to the Philippine Islands.

Then there was a lull in Japanese expansion for a period, since Japan wanted time to assimilate what she had annexed. The next period of feverish activity began in 1931 with the conquest of Manchukuo (Manchuria), when Manchukuo, formerly Chinese territory, was set up as a nominally independent state, just as Korea was in 1895. The present expansionist drive, which has been continuing since 1931, can be traced to the now famous, or rather notorious Tanaka Memorandum of 1928, in which plans for Japan's future expansion on the Asiatic mainland were clearly laid down. From this brief historical survey it should be clear that Japan's determination, to find more elbow-room for herself, in this planet of ours, is unshakable. Outward circumstances can hardly thwart this imperious drive and can at best determine the direction and speed of her expansion.

A scientific examination of the internal economy of Japan, will clearly explain Japan's military

aggression since 1931. It is easy to understand, her need for fresh territory, when her population is growing, and her existing territory is already too scanty for her present population. Looking to her industrial system, one finds that Japan has to import all her important raw materials, *viz.*, cotton, wool, pulp, iron, oil, etc., from a great distance. The expansion of her industrial system, like her need for territory, is necessitated by the growth of population. Therefore, to maintain her large population, Japan requires a safe and regular supply of raw materials. The expansion of industries, again, requires new markets.

Now, how are all these needs to be fulfilled? Will China, of her own accord, give up territory for colonization to Japan? Will she allow Japan to exploit her vast resources in raw materials, and her extensive market? Certainly not. Both national honour and self-interest will stand in the way. Further, the European Powers and the U. S. A. will not voluntarily permit Japan to monopolise China—her resources and her market. They will insist to the last on the "Open Door" policy in China which permits all Powers to share the Chinese spoils. Hence Japan has to seize Chinese territory by force. She has been doing this by stages, biting

off one slice at a time and taking time to digest it. Each attack is preceded by certain border incidents, which are carefully stage-managed, in order to serve as a pretext for Japanese aggression. The tactics are the same, whether one observes the north-western frontier of India, or Walwal in Abyssina, or the Manchurian frontier in the Far East.

Japan's imperialist needs and demands in the Far East, can be fulfilled only if she can establish her political hegemony over China, to the exclusion of the white races, and by virtually scrapping the "Open Door" policy. Time and again, her politicians have said as much in so many words. For instance, Japan's spokesmen have often said that she has special interests in the Far East, which cannot be compared to those of any other Western Power—that is, Japan's mission to umpire the Far East and maintain peace in that quarter, etc. etc. No doubt, besides the purely economic motive, the Japanese are inspired by the desire to found an Empire, and the consciousness of being an unconquered race whets their imperialist appetite. Incidentally, the foundation of an empire abroad enables the fascist elements in Japanese society to get the upper hand.

If China could somehow persuade herself to accept the political and economic suzerainty, or patronage of Japan, the Sino-Japanese conflict would end in no time. This is what Hirota, Japan's foremost diplomat, has been trying to achieve for the last three years. His speeches have been extremely conciliatory on the surface, with a constant appeal for Sino-Japanese co-operation. Now, what is the objective of this co-operation? Obviously, the enrichment of Japan, and the virtual enslavement of China. But this naked truth cannot be blurted out—hence the slogan is “Co-operation in a joint defence against Communism.” This slogan not only serves to cloak Japanese motives, but at the same time conciliates all anti-socialist elements whether in Japan, China, or elsewhere. Thus, the Indian papers of the 7th August, 1937, gave the following account of Hirota's foreign policy :—

“Declaring that a major point in Japan's requests to China was co-operation in a joint defence against communism, M. Hirota in the House of Representatives said, he believed that Sino-Japanese co-operation was possible if the radical elements in China, particularly the Communists, were effectively controlled. He added, the Japanese Government

wished to settle the North China incident on the spot, and at the same time to effect a fundamental re-adjustment of Sino-Japanese relations."

And similar statements in similar language have been made ever since Hirota first became Japan's Foreign Minister a few years ago.

Can China submit to this demand even if it brings her peace? My own view is that left to himself, Marshal Chiang Kai-shek, the Dictator of the Nanking Central Government, would have done so. At heart he is violently anti-Communist and since the split in the Kuomintang (Chinese National Party) in 1927, when he managed to establish his supremacy, he has spared no pains to exterminate the Chinese Communists and their allies. But Marshal Chiang has encountered consistent opposition from two quarters. The Western provinces of China, known as the Chinese Soviet States, being practically independent of Nanking, have kept up the fight against Japan and, on this point, have faithfully echoed the feelings of the Chinese masses. Secondly, the Western Powers with their vast interests in China, and with their prestige to maintain before the Eastern races, cannot easily persuade themselves to scuttle, the foreign investments in Latin America (Central and

South America). Regarding British investments in China, the following extract from the *London Times* of the 19th August, 1937 is illuminating :

“British direct interests in China are worth about 250 million pounds, made up of 200 million pounds in business investments, and 50 million pounds in government obligations. Of the total sum, about 180 million pounds is tied up in Shanghai, and of this 180 million of high proportion is in the Settlement district, north of the Soochow Creek. This is the district now being most heavily shelled and bombed. It is where most of the Public Utility offices and works, and where most of the large mercantile businesses, are established.”

The *Times* writer goes on to point out with dismay, that whilst previously this district has been policed under British Superintendents, the police stations have been evacuated and occupied by the Japanese. The White Races are consequently alive to the fact, that Japanese hegemony over China will mean not only the subjugation of the latter, but their own exclusion from the Far East.

Since the geography of a country often determines military strategy, it is necessary to note the salient features in the geography of China.

China's most important lines of communication

are her three great rivers : the Hwang-ho (or Yellow River) in the North, the Yang-tse in the Centre, and the Si-Kiang in the South. The entrance to the Si-Kiang is controlled by the British port of Hongkong; to the Yang-tse by Shanghai, which is jointly held by the foreign powers with Britain and America predominating. The entrance to the Hwang-ho is dominated by Japan, entrenched first in Korea and now in Manchuria (Manchukuo) as well. The one practicable land route into China is that from the north. Along this route the Mongols and the Manchus entered China proper, and in the years preceding the Great War, both Russia and Japan had their eyes on it. Since 1931, Japan has been aiming at the possession of this route, and the country adjoining it, and since July, 1937, fighting has been going on in this area. It should be remembered in this connection that high mountains separate China proper from the western part of the Republic (*viz.*, Sinkiang or Chinese Turkestan). The consequence of this is that the land route to China proper is from the north and we find that historically the power which has controlled Manchuria has always been in a strong position to dominate China. (See map I).

In order to understand in their proper perspec-

tive the events in the Far East since 1931, it is necessary to understand the broad lines of Japanese strategy. Since Japanese hegemony in China through peaceful penetration was not possible, Japan laid down her plans for a military conquest of China, or at least for military pressure on her. To achieve this objective, Japanese strategy had to work along two lines; firstly, to break up Chinese unity and secondly, to make it impossible for any other power to come to the aid of China. This purpose could be served only if Japan could seize the entire northern part of the Republic, including Manchukuo, Mongolia and northern China proper. These territories taken together form a compact mass, cutting off Russian Siberia from China proper (the valleys of Hwang-ho, Yangtse and Si-kiang rivers). A reference to the map will show that if Japan holds this area, she can in the event of war with Russia, penetrate through outer Mongolia and cut the Trans-Siberian railway at Lake Baikal. (See map II). And if Russia can be effectively isolated, no other country can come to China's rescue in an emergency. We shall see how Japan has progressed in the task of absorbing this area since 1931.

It is necessary to note at the outset that Japan

never lays all her cards on the table and she proceeds with her aggression cautiously, taking care that she is not attacked by any other power when her own hands are full. Moreover, she always manages to stage some "incident" in order to give her a pretext for seizing Chinese territory. The first "incident" was staged on September 18th, 1931, by Lieutenant Kawamoto of the Japanese Imperial Army, who was reconnoitring along the South Manchuria Railway track. This led to the seizure of Mukden the next day, and of the whole of Manchuria within a short period. At that time, the whole world was in the grip of an acute economic depression and Russia was feverishly pushing on her first Five-Year plan. Japan was, therefore, sure that there would be no effective challenge to her predatory moves. The Lytton Commission sent out by the League of Nations reported against Japan and following that, the League Assembly condemned the Japanese seizure of Manchuria. But Japan snapped her fingers at the League and walked out. This was followed by the sale of the Chinese Eastern Railway to Manchukuo by the Soviet Union in 1933, and in 1934 the Russo-Manchukuo Waterways Agreement was adopted. Though Manchukuo was not given *de jure* recognition by the other powers,

she obtained *de facto* recognition from most of them.

Manchukuo is a huge territory with plenty of room for colonisation, though the climate is severe and it is rich in several raw materials including coal. Moreover, it is exceedingly useful as a jumping-off ground for Japan in the event of war with Soviet Russia. Many people thought that it would take Japan years to develop Manchukuo and in the meantime, there would be peace in the Far East. But they were mistaken. Both on economic and on strategic grounds, Manchukuo cannot stand by itself. Only a part of the raw materials desired by Japan can be found there and the Manchukuan market is not big enough for Japan. Moreover, strategically Manchukuo is exceedingly weak, there being hostile territory on all sides. Consequently to satisfy her economic needs and to ensure the safety of the new state, Japan had to continue her aggression further.

In 1932, another "incident" was staged in Shanghai and the Shanghai War between China and Japan started. The upshot of it was that China was forced to demilitarise a certain area near Shanghai, and submit to a few other Japanese conditions. The strategic importance of Shanghai was not so

clear in 1932, but the present war (1937) has brought it to light.

By 1933, the consolidation of Manchukuo under the puppet Emperor, Pu Yi, was complete and Japan was ready for further extension of her frontiers. Fighting took place in North China outside the frontiers of Manchukuo. The Japanese troops seized Jehol and a slice of Chahar and marched up to the gates of Peking (now called Peiping). Vanquished in battle, the Chinese had to bow to the inevitable and see another slice of their territory annexed by Japan. The war ended with the Tangku Truce in 1933.

The year 1934 was comparatively uneventful but hostilities broke out again in 1935. As always happens with Japan, a fresh act of aggression was preceded by conciliatory speeches and a show of moderation in foreign policy. On January 23rd, 1935, Hirota delivered an address, advocating a policy of non-aggression and the adoption of a "good neighbour" policy with a view to effecting a rapprochement with China. This time, the slogan adopted by the Japanese was an autonomous North China (like an autonomous Manchukuo) and the Central Government of Nanking (new capital of China) was told not to interfere with Japanese

activities and negotiations in North China. But Nanking could not wholly oblige Japan and the people of North China did not want to walk into the Japanese trap as blindly as the Manchurians had done in 1931. The result was that the Japanese plans did not succeed. Nevertheless, when the conflict was finally liquidated, it was found that China had virtually lost another portion of her territory.

In 1933, Jehol and a part of Chahar had been absorbed by Manchukuo. Now, a demilitarised zone was created in Hopei province with its capital at Tungchow, 12 miles east Peiping, called the East Hopei autonomous area. In charge of this area was a Chinese renegade, Yin-Ju-Keng, and the territory was under Japanese domination. (Later on, large-scale smuggling went on within this area, presumably with Japanese connivance, with a view to evading the Chinese Customs). Further, the remaining part of Hopei (which contains Peiping and Tientsin) and a portion of Chahar were combined into a separate administrative unit under the Hopei-Chahar Political Council, headed by General Sung Cheh Yuan, the strongest leader outside Nanking. This Council, while afraid to oppose Japan openly, did not sever its connections with

Nanking.

In February, 1936, there was a military revolt in Tokyo and, for a time, the Japanese Government had its hands full at home. Nevertheless, it was not altogether inactive. With a view to strengthening her position internationally, Japan entered into a Pact with Germany—the German-Japanese-Anti-Comintern Pact. Towards the end of the year, in November, 1936, an attempt was made to push into Inner Mongolia down the Peiping-Paotow Railway, but the Mongol-Manchukuo mercenaries of Japan were held at bay in the province of Suiyan by General Fu Tso I, with the aid of Nanking's troops.

It should be clear to any student of history that since 1931, Japan has been growing increasingly assertive not only in the Far East, but in world affairs in general. If she had not felt strong in the international sphere, she would never have ventured an aggression against China. We have already referred to her withdrawal from the League of Nations after the seizure of Manchuria. Prior to this she had allowed the Anglo-Japanese Alliance to lapse, probably because she felt that she was powerful enough to do without it.

In the Washington Naval Treaty, Japan

had agreed to the ratio 5:5:3 in the matter of warships, etc., as between Britain, U. S. A. and herself. When this treaty lapsed in 1935, Japan insisted on parity and since this was not agreed to by the other Powers at the London Conference, she contemptuously walked out of it. When Britain wanted to bring about an economic understanding with Japan in the matter of world-markets, Japan refused to discuss any markets except those which were directly controlled by the former, and the London Conference of 1935 between the two powers broke up. From all these facts it will be clear that when 1937 dawned, Japan was morally and internationally prepared for a major conflict in the Far East.

But sometimes even the most well-informed are led astray. Between March and July, 1937 Japan lulled the whole world into the belief that she was passing through an economic crisis, and was therefore unable to launch on any military aggression against China. Articles appeared in several American journals to show that while the rest of the world, was enjoying an economic recovery, in Japan it was the reverse. Owing to this recovery, the price of raw materials had gone up considerably. Japan had to buy them at a high price and so her

cost of production had gone up—making it virtually impossible for her to compete in the world-market successfully. (This statement is disproved by the remarkably low prices of Japanese textiles in India at the present time). American Journalists took pains to argue, that because of this economic crisis, Japan had decided to go slow with China and was therefore offering her the hand of friendship. It was further argued that owing to the same reason, extreme militarists were out of favour for the time being and moderate politicians were getting the upper hand in Japan.

It now appears that Japan's moderation was simply a cloak to hide her real intentions, in order to lull her enemies to a sense of security. Japan chose this particular moment for attacking China for obvious reasons. Neither the U. S. A. nor Britain nor Russia is yet ready to challenge Japan in war. All of them are preparing feverishly and are piling up armaments and two or three years later, the outlook for Japan may be gloomy. It was therefore a case of "now or never" for Japan, and she struck. She carefully prepared for this attack by a period of sober talk and moderate action. And when everybody felt convinced that Japan was thinking in terms of peace, she launched

her attack. Thus writing on April 24th, 1937, the well-known Journal of New York, *The Nation*, said: "The prospects of peace in the Far East are greater than at any time since 1931." Writing on June 26th, the same Journal remarked that there was a lull in Japan's offensive against China. But little did the writer know then that it was merely a lull before the storm.

Apart from Japan's general preparedness for another drive, certain factors precipitated the present crisis in the Far East. The Scian coup and the kidnapping of Marshal Chiang Kai Shek in December 1936, prepared the ground for a "United Front" policy of China. There seems to be little doubt now that before Chiang was released by his captors, an understanding had been arrived at between the Chinese Soviets and Nanking Government on the basis of a common resistance against Japan. This understanding meant the completion of the unification of China for the first time in recent history. The Chinese Soviets were to give up their Communism and Separatism and submit to the direction of Nanking. Chiang was to lead united China against Japanese aggression and the Communist leaders, Chow En-lai and Chiang's own son, were to fall in line with him. Japan came to know

of this and attacked, before united China could proceed further with the work of consolidation.

The time is opportune for Japan in many ways. Though British, Russian and American re-armament is proceeding apace, as already stated, neither of them is yet ready for a conflict. It will still take time for Britain to complete her Singapore base. The Neutrality Act adopted by the U. S. A. is a clear indication that she wants to keep out of every international conflict. The Russian Army, according to Fascist reports, is seething with discontent and in any case is not as formidable as it appeared twelve months ago. The clash on the Soviet-Manchukuo border followed by the withdrawal on July 4th, 1937, of the Soviet troops from the disputed islands which belong to Russia under the 1860 Agreement with China—was a further proof that the Soviet Government was not prepared for a war.

Three days after the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from the Amur River, a fresh "incident" was staged near Peiping and the attack on North China was resumed on July 8th, 1937.

Man is proverbially wiser after a calamity has befallen him. It is now reported by well-informed journalists that Japan had been preparing for this

war for some time past. She is not satisfied with the occupation of Manchukuo. This country is too cold for Japanese immigrants. It has contributed only a small proportion of the raw materials needed by Japanese industry. It has, no doubt, brought some increase of trade to Japan, but this has been offset by the cost of administration and the losses incurred as a result of the competition of Manchurian products in the Japanese market. On the other hand, economically North China (*viz.*, the provinces of Shantung, Hopei, Chahar, Shansi and Suiyan) offers far more than Manchukuo. There are iron deposits in Chahar, Shansi and Southern Hopei. Shansi has also high-grade coal. Moreover, tin, copper, gold and oil are scattered throughout the five provinces. The Yellow River (Hwang-ho) valley is suitable for the cultivation of cotton, which is now imported into Japan from India and America to the value of 400 million yen annually. And the climate is more favourable to Japanese immigration than that of Manchukuo, as well as to cattle-breeding. (See map III).

The Japanese drew up plans for the exploitation of this territory some time ago, but Japanese capital was loath to come in, as long as the area remained under Chinese sovereignty. Hence,

militarism had to come to the aid of capitalism.

Apart from the economic urge behind the present aggression, there lurks the psychological factor. American journalists were partly right when they wrote during the earlier part of this year about the economic crisis in Japan, but their conclusions were wrong. Contrary to what they wrote, economic difficulties may instigate a "totalitarian" government to launch on a war abroad in order to stave off discontent at home. (The same crisis may overtake Germany in the not distant future). In the case of Japan, it may be averred that the economic difficulties which she encountered in the recent past as a result of her declining trade balance, made a revival of war-psychology necessary.

Further, since the defeat of the Japanese directed expedition against Suiyan (a province in North China) in November, 1936, it became apparent that the strategic areas of Inner Mongolia could only be obtained if the whole of North China were brought into subjugation. Without controlling Chahar and Suiyan, in particular, it is impossible to push into Inner Mongolia from the direction of Manchukuo.

Why is Japan so keen about Inner Mongolia,

a barren country of little economic value? The reason is strategic rather than economic. It has been remarked above that Japan has been aiming at a compact mass of territory comprising Manchukuo, North China and Mongolia. Now, in the meantime, Soviet diplomacy has not been idle and two big provinces of the Chinese Republic have passed under Russian influence—Sinkiang (or Chinese Turkestan) and Outer Mongolia (the upper portion of Mongolia adjoining Soviet Russia). (See map II). Sinkiang is not of much strategic importance to Japan (though it is to Soviet Russia owing to its proximity to India)—but Outer Mongolia is. With Outer Mongolia under her control, Soviet Russia can easily descend into North China. The only way to prevent this and cut off Russia permanently from China proper is to seize Inner Mongolia (the Southern part of Mongolia) and North China, and thereby form a compact corridor from West to East, separating Russian Siberia and Outer Mongolia from China proper. To annex this territory is at present Japan's objective. Once she succeeds in this effort, her next endeavour would be to build a strategic railway through this newly acquired territory from East to West. If she is able to consolidate her position there, she may

then think of moving into Outer Mongolia. What would then happen, it is difficult to predict. At present, Outer Mongolia is a Russian sphere of influence and the Soviet Government have declared very plainly that any move on the part of Japan within this territory would be tantamount to a *casus belli*.

But Japan has not given up all hope of uniting the Mongols under her suzerainty some time in future. Hence, Japanese agents often talk of "Mengkukuo" as a worthy political ideal for all the Mongols. This plan, if it ever materialises, will be a counterpart of Manchukuo. It will give the Mongols their own state, with the Gilbertian facade of autonomy of course, but in reality under Japanese tutelage. There are approximately five million Mongols in the Far East. Two millions live in the Hsingan province of Manchukuo. A million live in Outer Mongolia—a territory half as large as the United States, but mostly desert. Another million live in Inner Mongolia, while about a million are scattered in Sinkiang (Chinese Turkestan), Tibet and Soviet Russia (Buriat Republic). The nucleus of the future Mongol State of "Mengkukuo" has already come into existence with a Mongolian Political Council. Among the Mongol leaders who

are under Japanese influence are Li Shouhsein and Prince Teh.

But while an "autonomous" Mengkukuo may be a future project for Japan, an autonomous North China is her immediate objective.

Since the annexation of Manchukuo, Japanese influence in North China was steadily growing and this must have led them to hope that without a major conflict, another puppet state would be set up in the near future comprising the five provinces of North China. But the absorption of Canton province within Nanking's zone in the recent past, followed by the reported understanding of Marshal Chiang with the Chinese Communists in December last must have dashed Japanese hopes to the ground. A strong and united China was, at long last, rising before the world's eyes and that China would not give up her northern provinces without a fight.

Since January, 1937, Nanking began to assert influence over North China officials. She interfered with the Japanese—protected smuggling through East Hopei. She dared to order the suspension of the new Tientsin-Tokyo air-line, established by Japan without Chinese consent. In Northern Chahar there was a small-scale rebellion of Manchukuan and Mongolian Troops against

Japanese domination. Anti-Japanese incidents, were thus occurring with increasing frequency and not settled by abject submission to Japan's demands. To crown all, there was the report of an understanding between Nanking and the Chinese Communists which would bring into the field against Japan, the 90,000 seasoned soldiers belonging to the latter.

On July 3rd, 1937, the Japanese Ambassador, Shigeru Kawagoe, started negotiations with Nanking. Japan trimmed her sails and proposed the relinquishment of Japanese political control in North China, provided Nanking would recognize Manchukuo *de jure* and undertake "economic co-operation" with Japan. Nanking is reported to have rejected this proposal and her counter-proposals fell short of Japanese requirements. No further proof was needed that a new China had come into existence which would soon exercise its full authority over the northern provinces. Therefore, Japan struck without delay and an "incident" was staged at Lukouchiao, about 18 miles west of Peiping (Peking) when Japanese troops engaged in night-manoeuvres clashed with units of the Chinese Twenty-Ninth Army stationed in that area.

Looking at this incident legally, there can be

no doubt that the Japanese were in the wrong. Though the Boxer Protocol of 1901 entitled them to station troops in the Peiping Legation quarter and at certain points in the Peiping-Tientsin railroad, they sent their troops outside the specified areas and obstructed, rather than maintained, communications with the sea—the purpose for which the protocol was designed. However, soon after the clash the Japanese Government made the following demands :—

(1) Withdrawal of the Twenty-Ninth Army from its present lines west of Peiping.

(2) Punishment of the Chinese responsible for the conflict.

(3) Adequate control of all anti-Japanese activities in North China ; and

(4) Enforcement of measures against communism.

It is reported that the Hopei-Chahar Political Council submitted to these demands on July 19th, and the terms of the settlement were published in Toyko, on July 23rd. The expectation on the Chinese side was that both the Chinese and Japanese fighting forces would withdraw from the zone and it is extremely probable that Nanking

would have reluctantly endorsed the above settlement. But when the Japanese troops did not leave the area, the subordinate officers, and the rank and file of the Chinese troops refused to withdraw. On July 26th, the Japanese military commanders issued an ultimatum that the Chinese troops must withdraw by noon, July 28th. The latter refused to budge and the Japanese thereupon proceeded to evict them by force. Thus the war started.

Though Marshal Chiang, the Nanking Dictator, is not ready for a war, he has stood up to Japan and it is not likely that he will give in without a fight.

Japan is preparing for a long fight and the Japanese Diet has already voted large sums for the campaign. It is reported that she will spend up to £117,650,000 in order to carry on the war till the end of January, 1938.

The latest development in the Far Eastern War is the extension of the fight to the Shanghai area. On the 9th August a fresh "incident" took place at the Hungjao aerodrome near Shanghai. Two Japanese naval officers were shot dead while attempting to enter the aerodrome. Thereupon, Japanese naval forces took drastic action to avenge the shooting and the Japanese Admiral demanded,

among other things, that all Chinese troops should be withdrawn to a distance not less than 30 miles from Shanghai, and that all the defences prepared within the area should be immediately dismantled. The Chinese response to the demand was the movement into the Shanghai area of the 88th Division from Nanking in order to reinforce the local troops. The Japanese regarded this as a flagrant breach of the 1932 Agreement—but the Chinese retorted by saying that the Japanese themselves, by posting troops in Chinese territory and provocatively bringing a large fleet to the scene, had absolved China from any obligation to observe the terms of that Agreement.

Thus the war is going on along two fronts—Peiping and Shanghai. A moot point in this connection is as to which party desired the extension of the war to the Shanghai front. In all probability the Japanese.

The Japanese, being blocked on land, as they were when Nanking troops moved into Hopei province, turned to the sea. The semicircle of armies which Marshal Chiang threw round Peiping (under Japanese occupation) based on a well-prepared line efforts, was a bold and important strategic move. The left flank of the Government

Army is at Nankow, the famous pass, where the Peiping-Paotow railway cuts through the hills. The centre of the semi-circle depends on Paotingfu, 100 miles south of Peiping on the Hankow Railway. The right flank sweeps round to within 30 miles of Tientsin, also under Japanese occupation. (See map IV). The task of forcing this semicircle—"Hindenburg" line—is a formidable one. Hence, the decision from a strategic point of view to undermine Chinese resistance by attacking Shanghai.

If China has a heart, it is the financial and commercial centre at the mouth of the Yang-tse. Japan is attacking this heart in order to disorganize the foreign-controlled industrial, commercial and financial centre of China with a view to imperilling the economic basis of the Central Government, demoralizing national feeling and terrifying the Chinese bourgeoisie. Shanghai is virtually at the mercy of the Japanese navy and an attack on this prosperous and ever-growing city is the obvious way to bring the war to a rapid conclusion. But the effectiveness of this thrust will depend on the extent of the dislocation of trade and of the material damage accruing from the war.

The war will go on for some time. Japan will try "to paralyse the heart of China in order to

amputate the limbs. China must stand or fall, therefore, by the war in Shanghai"—as an eminent strategist has declared. Will China be able to survive this blood-bath? If Canton remains open for supplies of armaments and the loss in revenue due to the fighting in Shanghai is not too serious—China may, perhaps, keep going sufficiently long to be able to endanger the social and economic stability of Japan. As against this consideration is the fact that the Japanese Navy is attempting a blockade of the Chinese ports and further, that there is a war fever among the Japanese people and there does not seem to be any difference between the aims of the military and the civilians in the Island Empire.

China has appealed once again to the League of Nations, as she did in 1931. But what is the value of this moribund League in such an emergency? World-opinion is, of course, on the side of China—but world-opinion is not of much value when pitted against machine-guns. The outlook for China is gloomy indeed. The mellow view that time is on China's side is not correct any longer. To-day, China is fighting against time. God grant that she may succeed.

Japan has done great things for herself and for Asia. Her re-awakening at the dawn of the

present century sent a thrill throughout our Continent. Japan has shattered the white man's prestige in the Far East and has put all the Western imperialist powers on the defensive—not only in the military but also in the economic sphere. She is extremely sensitive—and rightly so—about her self-respect as an Asiatic race. She is determined to drive out the Western Powers from the Far East. But could not all this have been achieved without Imperialism, without dismembering the Chinese Republic, without humiliating another proud, cultured and ancient race? No, with all our admiration for Japan, where such admiration is due, our whole heart goes to China in her hour of trial. China must still live—for her own sake and for humanity. Out of the ashes of this conflict she will once again rise phoenix-like as she has so often done in the past.

Let us learn the lessons of this Far Eastern Conflict. Standing at the threshold of a new era, let India resolve to aspire after national self-fulfilment in every direction—but not at the expense of other nations and not through the bloody path of self-aggrandisement and imperialism.

*September 19, 1937.*

## EUROPE—TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

It is customary in modern Politics to classify the different nations as the 'Haves' and 'Have-nots.' The 'Haves' are those, like Great Britain and France, that have profited as a result of the Treaties of Versailles, Trianon and Neuilly, following the Great War. The 'Have-nots' are those that have lost territory under some of these Treaties or have specific grievances against their provisions. In Europe, Great Britain, France, as well as the succession states that have been carved out of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire are among the 'Haves.' On the other hand, Germany, Italy, Hungary, Austria and Bulgaria are among the 'Have-nots.' Though Russia lost much of her territory as a result of the last War, she is now interested in maintaining the status quo and is therefore classified among the 'Haves.' And though Italy acquired territory from the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the end of the War, she is nevertheless regarded as a 'Have-not' because she was expecting a greater share of the spoils of war.

Italy was cajoled into joining the Allies in 1915 by the terms of the Secret Pact of London, wherein Britain and France promised her several things, including the Dalmatian Coast which later on was assigned by the Peace Conference to Yugoslavia (called in the Peace Treaty the kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes).

Among 'Have-nots,' Bulgaria is the quietest. She lost territory to all her neighbours (Roumania, Greece and Serbia—now Yugoslavia) as a result of the Balkan War of 1912 and the Great War as well. But she nurses her grievances in secret and sighs for better days, though she feels helpless within a ring of hostile powers. Hungary is more active, so far as propaganda goes. Her protagonists roam all over Europe and endeavour to canvass support among the Big Powers for revision of her frontiers. From the military point of view, Hungary is not an important factor to-day, having lost more than half of her former territory and population to Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia (formerly Serbia) and Roumania.

Till recently, Soviet Russia would have been regarded as an explosive force of gigantic proportions, busy in stirring up revolution all over the World. But such is not the case to-day. After the

death of Lenin and the elimination of Trotsky, Soviet Russia under the guidance of Stalin is interested only in building up Socialism within the Soviet frontiers. The sudden resurgence of Germany has helped to accentuate this tendency. Russia has therefore joined the League of Nations, which by the way is dominated by the capitalist powers, and under the slogan of 'Collective Security and Peace,' is doing everything possible to prevent a disturbance of the status quo in Europe.

The really explosive forces in Europe to-day are Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Ranged against them are Britain, France and Soviet Russia. On the complicated chess-board of Europe interminable moves are going on, and the scene is changing from day to day.

Before the Great War, the status quo was preserved by maintaining the 'Balance of Power.' The powers interested in preserving the status quo would have a secret alliance among themselves and would endeavour to play against one another the potentially hostile ones who refused to join them. The League of Nations which was constituted in 1919 was meant to put an end to secret diplomacy and to the division of the world into rival groups of powers, which served to keep up the

bogey of war. In its place, was introduced a new technique, whereby all nations were to be brought into the League and made jointly responsible for the maintenance of 'Collective Security and Peace.' Both the League of the Nations and its new technique seem to have failed in their objective, because there are powers that do not feel interested in preserving the status quo and among them Japan and Germany, are no longer members of the League—while the most powerful factor in international politics, the U. S. A., has never been a member.

To understand the meaning and purpose behind the recent disturbances in Europe, one has to comprehend the aims of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Since Mussolini came to power in 1922, Italy has been thinking aggressively of expansion—of a place in the sun—of a revival of the Roman Empire. But till January, 1935, Italy did not herself know which direction her policy of expansion should follow. She had grievances against Yugoslavia, who had robbed her of the Dalmatian Coast. She was snarling at France who had taken the Italian Districts of Savoy and Nice and was in possession of Tunisia, in North Africa, with a large Italian population, and of the Island of Corsica which be-

longs geographically to Italy. She was hostile to Imperialist Britain who was in control of Italian 'Malta' and had, with French acquiescence, converted the Mediterranean Sea into a British lake.

The tension between Italy and France was particularly acute, with the result that both sides of the Franco-Italian frontier were heavily fortified and guarded. Then in 1933, the Nazi Colossus suddenly appeared on the scene and changed the whole aspect of Europe. France rushed to England for support and alliance against the new danger. But Britain was non-committal. Perhaps in her heart of hearts she relished the idea of checking French hegemony on the Continent. Perhaps she was simply following her traditional policy in international affairs. However, France was nettled and in annoyance, she turned to Italy and Soviet Russia. France wanted to withdraw her troops from the Italian frontier, and concentrate them against Germany, and she wanted, further, an ally on Germany's eastern flank. Thus there came into existence the Laval-Mussolini Pact and the Franco-Soviet Pact.

The Laval-Mussolini Pact in January, 1935, decided for Italy the direction of her future expansion. Italy squared up her differences with France

and gave up territorial ambitions in Europe. In return, France agreed to give her a free hand in Africa. The result was the rape of Abyssinia.

After the conquest of Abyssinia, Mussolini made a speech in which he declared to the world that Italy had now become a 'satisfied' power. The annexation of Abyssinia had been regarded by Britain as an encroachment on her preserves in Africa and the speech appeared as a pointer in the direction of the renewal of Anglo-Italian friendship. That expectation was not fulfilled, however, though Britain had at first challenged Italy over the Abyssinia question and then beaten a quick retreat before the bluff and swagger of Mussolini—she had not forgotten the humiliation. In order to repair the damage done to her prestige among the Mediterranean and Near Eastern nations—she set about strengthening her naval and aerial bases in the Mediterranean. The First Lord of the Admiralty, Sir Samuel Hoare, went on a tour of inspection in the Mediterranean and concluded it with a public declaration that Britain would not withdraw from that zone. Other Cabinet ministers, like Anthony Eden, also made pronouncements to the effect that the Mediterranean was Britain's life-line—that it was not merely a short cut, but a main arterial road.

It is this determination on the part of Britain to maintain her position in the Mediterranean and to strengthen it further which has irritated and antagonised Italy—for Italy is equally determined to increase her influence in the Mediterranean through the expansion of her Navy and Air Force and this could take place only at the expense of Britain. It should therefore be clear that the present Anglo-Italian tension is not a product of Il Duce's ill-humour, nor is it a passing phase. It will continue until the question of the future hegemony over the Mediterranean is finally solved through the voluntary withdrawal or defeat of one of the two rival powers. Fraternising letters may pass between Neville Chamberlain and Signor Mussolini, Ambassadors and Foreign Ministers may shake hands—but a political conflict born of objective factors and forces will continue, so long as the causes remain.

Italy's reply to Britain's renewed interest in the Mediterranean is her intervention in the Spanish Civil War. It would be puerile to think or suggest that Italy has plumped for Franco because of her sympathy for the latter's Fascist aims or her hatred of Communism. Political sympathy she would have for Franco in any case, but she is pouring out

her blood and money for Franco primarily for strategic reasons. The same is true of Germany and whoever does not realise this, understands nothing of the Spanish Civil War.

In spite of her progress in rearmament, Italy is no match for Britain. British rearmament throughout the world has made Italy's position weaker since the end of the Abyssinian War. In any case, Britain through her control of Gibraltar and Suez can, in the event of a war with Italy, bottle up the Italian fleet and carry out an economic blockade which may prove disastrous to the latter. Italy has to import most of her raw materials like coal, iron, oil, wool, cotton, etc., and two-thirds of her sea-borne trade comes from the Atlantic, while eighty per cent of her imports come over the Mediterranean. Her coastline is long and vulnerable and she can maintain contact with her African possessions, Libya, Eritrea and Abyssinia, only if she dominates the Mediterranean. For all these reasons, an economic blockade combined with an attack from British naval stations, like Malta and Cyprus, can create havoc for Italy and even strangle her. She may retaliate by attacking British possessions in the Mediterranean or British trade passing through that sea, but she can neither attack Britain nor touch

Britain's sources of raw materials and food which lie outside the Mediterranean zone. Thus, matched against Britain in war, Italy is virtually helpless and can play a primarily defensive role.

And as long as Spain remains friendly to Britain, or even neutral, Italy's helplessness will remain unrelieved. Only with the help of Spain can Italy escape from her fatal strategic position. With Spain under her control, Italy could take the offensive against Britain. She could destroy Gibraltar and menace both the trade routes of Britain—the Mediterranean route and the cape route. What is more, she could get over the blockade by using the land routes over Spain in order to bring imports from the Atlantic side. As the advent of Air Force more than compensated Italy for the weakness of her navy, *vis-a-vis* Great Britain, during the Abyssinian campaign, so the control of Spain, or even a foothold in Spanish territory, would enable her to convert her present, fatally weak and defensive position into a strong, offensive one in the event of a future war.

Thus Italy is fighting Great Britain in Spain. She is helping Franco in order to get a foothold in Spanish territory.

After considering these strategic factors, one

need not be surprised that Italy is so greatly interested in Franco's success. Rather, it is surprising that there should be people in England who sympathise with Franco and the rebels. As captain Liddell Hart, the well-known British strategist says in *Europe in Arms*.

"Strategically, the danger (to British interests) is so obvious that it is difficult to understand the eagerness with which some of the most avowedly patriotic sections of the British public have desired the rebels' success."

This is probably a case of political prejudice (*viz.*, hatred of the Socialists and communists) overriding the dictates of self-interest.

Notwithstanding all that I have just said, it has to be pointed out that Italy to-day is on the whole a satisfied power. She resents British supremacy in the Mediterranean and she thinks that as in days of yore, the Mediterranean should be a Roman lake. But she will not go to any extreme in her conflict with Great Britain. Intervention in the Spanish Civil War is all right for her, because she knows full well that none of the Big Powers is yet ready for an international war. Mussolini is far too shrewd a politician to stake his position or the position of his country in a risky adventure

in the near or distant future. Therefore, we may rest assured that Italy will not take the offensive, in disturbing the peace of Europe—nor will she enter into a war unless she is pretty sure of victory.

But the Germany under Hitler is an incalculable factor, despite the sober and cautious policy of the Reichswehr, the German Army. Nazi Germany has been dreaming dreams which can be fulfilled only through the arbitrament of war. Moreover, the economic crisis within Germany has been growing so acute, that many observers opine that the day is not far off when she may have to launch on a war abroad, in order to stave off discontent at home. To understand the future of Germany, we shall have to probe a little deeper.

Since the Great War there has been a French hegemony on the Continent. Not content with crushing Germany, France erected a diplomatic wall around Germany through alliances with Poland and with the Little Entente—the succession states, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Roumania. She followed this up by establishing cordial relations with Turkey which was formerly within the German orbit of influence. Germany looked on helplessly while she was thus diplomatically isolated from the civilized world. Her only reply to this policy of

encirclement was the Treaty of Rapallo with Soviet Russia.

French hegemony in post-War Europe has been anathema to Germany whose influence on the Continent had been paramount since the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, resulting in the ignominious defeat of France. Since then, Germany had been expanding in several directions. Outside Europe she went in for colonial expansion. In the sphere of trade she bid fair to be a rival to Great Britain and the U.S.A. She built a powerful navy which was looked upon with suspicion by Britain. She brought Austria, Bulgaria and Turkey within her sphere of influence and planned the Berlin-Baghdad Railway which was regarded as a thrust at Britain's Eastern possessions. But the War smashed all these achievements and aspirations and for a decade Germany lay in the slough of despair, while her thinkers began to philosophise about the decline of the West and Spengler wrote his *Untergang des Abend-Landes*. Then came the new awakening through the emergence of the National-Socialist or Nazi Party.

The political doctrine of the Nazi Party can be summed up in one phrase—'Drang Nach Osten'—or 'Drive to the East.' The doctrine was first

propounded by Muller van den Bruck in his book, *Das dritte Reich* or 'the Third Empire.' He did not live to see the establishment of the third Reich under Hitler in 1933, for he committed suicide in 1925 in a fit of despair. His idea was, however, taken up by Hitler and amplified in his (Hitler's) book *Mein Kampf*, or "My Struggle," which he wrote in prison in 1923. The essence of the above doctrine is that Germany should give up the idea of being a naval or colonial power. She should remain a continental power and her expansion should take place on the Continent—towards the East. It was pre-War Germany's greatest blunder to go in for colonial expansion and thereby come into conflict with Great Britain.

The new social philosophy of the Nazis, as expounded by Hitler, advocates the purification and strengthening of the German race through elimination of Jewish influence and a return to the soil. "Blunt und Boden," or "Blood and Soil," is the new slogan for the German people. In foreign policy, the Nazis advocate the unification of all German-speaking peoples and the acquisition eastwards of more elbow-room for the prolific German race. In practical politics, the above

objectives amount to the annexation (1) of Austria,\* (2) of Memel which she has lost to Lithuania, (3) of Danzig which has been made a free city under the League of Nations, (4) of the German-speaking part of Czechoslovakia with a population of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  millions, (5) of the Polish Corridor and the Silesian coalfields which she has lost to Poland, (6) of the rich grain-producing lands of Soviet Ukraine and (7) possibly also of the German-speaking parts of Switzerland, Italian Tyrol and other adjoining countries.

Germany repudiated the military clauses of the Treaty of Versailles in March, 1935, occupied the Rhineland in March, 1936, and upset all calculations of European diplomats when she achieved the 'Anschluss' without firing a shot. Her continued rearmament under these circumstances can have but one meaning, *viz.*, preparation for war. Her rearmament has driven the last nail in the coffin of international disarmament, and in sheer panic the whole of Europe is now engaged in rearming. When such frantic preparations for war are going on all round, the slightest incident may one day light an international conflagration.

\* Since this was written the 'Anschluss' or union with Austria has already been achieved by the Nazis.

It now remains for us to consider to what extremes Germany will go to realise her aims. At what stage will she go in for war and with whom?

Political prophecy is always a difficult job—but one thing is certain. Germany has not forgotten the lessons of her last defeat. Hers was not a military defeat, but an economic one. And it was the British Navy which was primarily responsible for starving her to submission. It is therefore certain that Germany will not enter into a war if she knows that Britain will be against her. In 1914, Germany foolishly enough, did not believe till the last moment that Britain would take up the gauntlet on behalf of Belgium and France. It is now generally admitted by historians that if Britain had made her intentions known to Germany beforehand, the latter would probably have kept aloof from the Austro-Serbian conflict and thereby averted—or at least postponed—the World War.

Though in his book, *Mein Kampf*, Hitler asked for a final show-down with France, Germany's foreign policy has been modified since the Nazis assumed the reins of office. Germany no longer wants to get back Alsace-Lorraine from France or Eupen-Malmady from Belgium. In other words, Germany does not demand a revision of the fron-

tiers in Western Europe. The reason for this is not far to seek. Germany knows quite well that an attack on France or Belgium or Holland will bring Britain into the arena at once and there would probably be a repetition of the last war. Germany has therefore been continually offering to sign a Western Pact which would guarantee the status quo in Western Europe. For a large number of British politicians this offer is a tempting one, because it removes once for all any possible threat to British interests. Germany while making this offer has been striving hard to drive a bargain at the international counter, her demand being that Britain and France should cease to interest themselves in Central and Eastern Europe so that Germany may have free hand in rearranging the map of that part of the world.

Germany is now preparing in three directions. Firstly, she is going in for an all-round rearmament. Secondly, she is trying to make herself self-sufficient as regards the supply of food and basic raw-materials. (This is a provision against a future economic blockade). This work was started last year in accordance with Germany's Four-Year Plan. Thirdly, she is trying to persuade the Western Powers to agree to neutrality in the event of a war

in Central or Eastern Europe. Until all these preparations are complete, it is extremely doubtful if Germany will voluntarily launch a war.

To win over Britain to an attitude of neutrality, Germany has launched a large-scale propaganda in that country and she has already attained a fair measure of success. In this effort, Germany has exploited the general hatred of Communism which can be found among the richer and middle classes in Britain. The Franco-Soviet Pact has come handy and the Nazis continually emphasise that for Britain to be tied up with France means fighting a war in Eastern Europe on the side of Soviet Russia, though Britain has no interest in that Zone. Alongside of this, the Nazis pledge themselves not to harm British interests in any quarter of the globe. As a result of this endeavour, there is an influential pro-Nazi group in Great Britain—with supporters in the House of Lords, in the City of London and generally among the ruling classes and the fighting forces. There are supporters even among the Labourites, though they are attracted by different reasons.

It is generally believed that Montagu Norman, Governor of the Bank of England, Premier Neville Chamberlain and Sir Robert Vansittart, formerly

the strong man in the Foreign Office, are all pro-Nazi.

It is too early to say if Britain's foreign policy will ultimately follow a straight line or if it will continue to wobble, as it has often done in the past. At the present moment, British public opinion is terribly confused. Firstly, there is the pro-Nazi group, referred to above, who wants a Western Pact and no commitments in Central and Eastern Europe. Secondly, there is the anti-German Conservative Party represented by Winston Churchill who are distrustful of the Nazis and apprehend that when Germany is once supreme in Europe, she will challenge British interests abroad. They point out in this connection that Britain has nothing to fear from France and that outside Europe, British and French colonial interests are everywhere bound up together. Thirdly, there are the Socialists and Communists who on ideological grounds are anti-German and pro-French in their general attitude.

In the midst of this confusion, the British Foreign Office, is following a definite policy, *viz.*, to persuade France to give up her interest in Central and Eastern Europe. The aim of Vansittart's policy, now continued by Lord Halifax, is to force Germany to be and to remain a European Conti-

mental Power. That is why Britain has acquiesced in German rearmament, made the Naval Agreement with Germany in June, 1935, advised France to ignore German Military occupation of Rhineland in March, 1936, warned France not to help the Spanish Government though she was clearly entitled to do so under International Law. It is further alleged by those who are in a position to know diplomatic secrets that the British Foreign Office encouraged Poland in 1933 to come to terms with the Nazi Government. (The German-Polish non-Aggression Pact was adopted next year). It also encouraged Belgium to break the alliance with France and return to neutrality and Jugoslavia to make friends with Italy and Germany, against the advice of France. It further encouraged the pro-Nazi Henlein Party in Czechoslovakia and intrigued for breaking, or at least slackening, the bonds of the little Entente (Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia and Roumania) and of the Balkan Entente (Jugoslavia, Roumania, Greece and Turkey) which are under French influence.

It would not be improper to conclude from the above facts that the British Foreign Office has been secretly working contra France, at least in Europe, and that French hegemony on the Continent is

distasteful to Whitehall. Perhaps because of this, French politicians of the Right were greatly annoyed with Great Britain and Laval proceeded to make alliances with Italy and Soviet Russia, independently of Britain. In fact, Laval's foreign policy might, from one point of view, be regarded as anti-British. But French politicians of the Left follow blindly the policy of the British Foreign Office, believing that France and Britain should hold together through thick and thin.

At present the German Foreign Office is playing an aggressive role, while France is busy trying to counteract the former's moves and activities. Outside Britain, the Nazis have been remarkably successful in Belgium. A pro-Nazi Party (the Rexists) has come into existence in Belgium and Nazi propaganda is active among the Flemish-speaking people of Belgium. The Belgium Government has broken away from the alliance with France and will in future adopt an attitude of neutrality in the event of war in Central or Eastern Europe. The treaty of Rapallo with Soviet Russia has virtually lapsed since the Nazis came to power in 1933; but as if to compensate Germany for that, the Nazi Government entered into a non-Aggression Pact with Poland. This Pact served to under-

mine greatly French influence in Poland. Last year, France made gigantic efforts to recover her influence in Poland and a number of visits took place on both sides. But it seems probable that the Franco-Polish Alliance will never become a living force again and that in future Poland will follow an independent foreign policy—that is, a policy of neutrality in the event of a Franco-German or Russo-German conflict.

In addition to the above activities, Germany is now exceedingly busy in trying to weaken France by slackening the bonds of the Little Entente and Balkan Entente and by getting a foothold in Spanish territory. With the help of several alliances and friendly contacts, the position of France to-day is exceedingly strong and as long as this position continues, she will never agree to withdraw her interest in Central and Eastern Europe. She will continue to insist—as Litvinov, the Soviet Foreign Minister, also does—that peace is indivisible and that there should be one European Pact to guarantee collective security to all the states under the aegis of the League of Nations. Failing this, besides the Western Pact, there should be another Pact to guarantee peace in Central and Eastern Europe. To this, Germany does not agree and will not agree.

France has fortified herself with military alliances with Czechoslovakia and Soviet Russia, The two latter powers have also a military alliance between themselves. Consequently, these three powers will always be found together in the event of an international emergency. Czechoslovakia has an understanding with the other Little Entente powers, Jugoslavia and Roumania. And Jugoslavia and Roumania have an understanding with Greece and Turkey through the Balkan Entente. Germany hopes that by weaning away Jugoslavia and Roumania, she will isolate Czechoslovakia in Central Europe—for help from Russia can reach Czechoslovakia only through Roumania or through Poland. Poland is no longer a problem to Germany because of the non-aggression pact. Through Britain, she is trying to persuade France that as a military factor, Soviet Russia is not of much consequence and that France should give the go-by to the military clauses of the Franco-Soviet Pact.

The recent execution of eight Army Generals in Russia has given a handle to the capitalist powers and they are carrying on a terrific propaganda to the effect that the Soviet military machine is racking with indiscipline and cannot be relied on

in the event of war. Last but not least, Germany is trying her level best to obtain a foothold in Spanish territory, so that in the event of war with France she could stab her in the back by cutting off her communications with North Africa, from where France always obtains large supplies of men and materials when war breaks out in Europe. Germany hopes that by weakening France on all sides and by putting pressure on her through the British Foreign Office, she will ultimately make her agree to a Western Pact, giving Germany a free hand in Central and Eastern Europe. If France does not agree to this and if she ultimately goes to war with Germany on the side of Soviet Russia, she will find herself considerably weakened compared to what she was in 1914.

But will France fall in with Germany's plans? Ostensibly not. For Britain it is immaterial who dominates the Continent—France or Germany—for Britain's interests lie outside Europe. But France cannot so easily give up the hegemony in Europe for, unlike Britain, she is a Continental Power, besides being a Colonial Power. Moreover, France is fighting not merely for power and prestige, but also for her national safety. She has not forgotten the tragic defeat of 1870. Her popu-

lation is stationary and is about two-thirds of that of Germany, whose population is still growing. Consequently, France has a genuine horror of German invasion, while Britain has not, as long as the German Navy keeps to the prescribed limits of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement. To crown everything, there is in France, a deep distrust of German aims and aspirations which has been accentuated by violent denunciations of France in Hitler's book, *Mein Kampf*. As a writer has put it succinctly, in France the Right hates Germany, the Left hates Hitler. In these circumstances, it is extremely doubtful if France will ever give up her allies and alliances in Central and Eastern Europe as long as the violently nationalistic Nazi Party remains in power.

The issue of the Spanish Civil War is hanging in the balance and it is too early to say how far German diplomacy will succeed there. But in Central and Eastern Europe it has made considerable headway. In Roumania, the King and the Cabinet are, on the whole, pro-German and the Francophile ex-Foreign minister, Titulescu, lost considerable influence. There is an anti-Semitic pro-Nazi Party, the Iron Guard, led by Codreanu, which is behind the Government. In Jugoslavia,

the Premier Stoyadinovitch is pro-Nazi, as also his Government, while the Royal Family is under British influence. In Greece, the Premier General Metaxas, who has made himself the Dictator, is undoubtedly under German influence. And Greece is important to Germany, because should the Russian Fleet in the Black Sea enter the Mediterranean through the Dardanelles, it could be attacked from a base in the Grecian Islands. Then Hungary and Bulgaria, being 'Have-not' powers, are expected to line up with Germany, if they see any chance of having their national grievances redressed thereby. Thus it appears that Germany has stolen a march over France throughout the Balkan Peninsula and she has been throwing out commercial baits in profusion.

But in international politics there is no finality. France is following on the heels of Germany everywhere. It is difficult to predict how long the Governments of Metaxas in Greece or Stoyadinovitch in Jugoslavia will last. The pro-French party in Roumania, though out of power for the time being, is not negligible and the Balkan temperament is proverbially changeable. Moreover, Germany finds pitted against herself, one of the finest diplomats of modern Europe, President Eduard Benes

of Czechoslovakia.

The scene is changing from day to day and political forecasts are anything but easy. One thing is certain. If war comes, it will come as the result of a German challenge to the status quo in Central and Eastern Europe. But will it come? The answer rests primarily with Britain. Germany will not repeat the errors of 1914 and will not go into a war, if she knows that Britain will be against her. She might be trapped into it as she was in 1914, thinking that Britain would keep out of it. If France and Britain agree to be neutral in a conflict in Central or Eastern Europe, war will break out in Europe, as sure as the sun rises in the East, the moment Germany is ready for it. Even if France lines up with Soviet Russia, with Britain remaining neutral, there may be a war, though the upshot of it will be doubtful.

If Franco wins, it will be a victory for Italy and Germany, and will mean the end of British hegemony in the Mediterranean and dark days ahead of France. But Russian Colossus has often proved to be an enigma. It baffled Napoleon—the conqueror of Europe. Will it baffle Hitler?

*Dalhousie*

*August 21, 1937*

## REPLY TO THE ADDRESS OF BOMBAY CORPORATION

I thank the Corporation from the bottom of my heart for the address presented to me. I am not presumptuous enough to imagine that I am worthy of the great honour. On the contrary, I am here, in spite of my shortcomings, as a servant of the Indian National Congress, and the Indian people at large.

The address is a token of the Corporation's generosity and largeness of heart. I take it, that the presentation of the address shows the real feeling of the Corporation towards the movement of India's emancipation, and towards all those who had been taking part in that movement.

While in Europe, I had the opportunity to study the Socialist Municipality of Vienna. Anyone who has been to that city, cannot return without being convinced of the importance and significance of the working of that Municipality to all those interested in civic affairs.

During the last 12 years that Municipality

has provided good housing to 200,000 persons without raising loans, and without additional taxation. The entire cost has been charged to the revenue and realised through taxing entertainments.

The Municipality has effectively solved the problem of water supply, roads, education for children, health, infant mortality and hundreds of other problems. If so much can be done in one city, naturally it has its importance to the other parts of the world.

I welcome the decision to do away with limited franchise in the Bombay Municipal elections. It is a significant fact which is important not only for Bombay but for the whole of the Country. I offer my congratulations to the Bombay Ministry. I wish that the other provinces would take a leaf out of Bombay's forward march, especially in the matter of introduction of the system of adult franchise.

The city of Bombay is very well situated. It is on a sea beach, and compares favourably with any other city in the world. But that is only one side of the picture. There are the slums, and there are the poorer classes who are living under bad housing conditions. The Corporation will have to attend to these problems.

One of India's great men, the late Deshbandhu Das when he became the Mayor of Calcutta, stated that the civic bodies should be made into a real poor men's Corporation, and laid down a programme of service of the poor. It was an ideal programme. We have yet to travel a long way before we can call our municipalities poor men's Corporations. What is needed is the passion, the zeal, and the desire to serve the poor. That will be the motive power, which can convert the Corporation into really a poor men's Corporation.

In Bombay good progress has been made in Primary Education, and other allied matters. I hope that the Bombay Corporation will move with the times and travel as fast as possible to reach the ideal state.

In the world, civic affairs are consciously or unconsciously moving towards municipal socialism. One ought to understand what this term implies ; there is no need to fight shy of it. The work that has been undertaken by the municipalities of some of the Western cities would have been unthinkable 20 or 30 years ago. For example look what the Vienna Municipality has done; and the Burmingham Municipality which has started its own Bank. Other duties and responsibilities

have been undertaken by municipalities.

Municipal Socialism is nothing but collective effort to serve the entire community. If that were done, the corporation would be serving not only the particular city concerned, but humanity as a whole.

It had been frequently said by foreigners that municipal development in India has been due to contact with the West, and that before that contact very little had been achieved in India. I want to give the lie direct to this claim. In municipal matters Indians are building on ancient foundations just as they are building on ancient foundations in matters of political freedom. May I refer to the ancient relics of civic advance as found from the Mahenjo Daro excavations. Even after that, there was the Mauryan Empire with its Capital Patliputra. The books about this ancient city tell the varying functions that were carried on by the Patliputra Municipality, which compares favourably with the most modern civic bodies in the world. It is necessary to remind ourselves about this, as due to long servitude we have forgotten our own past.